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D'AUBIGNE'S

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION

REVIEWED.

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Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church ;
and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

Matt. XVI. IV.

D'AUBIGNE'S "HISTORY

OF THE

GREAT REFORMATION

IN

Germany and Switzerland,"

REVIEWED;

OR

THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

EXAMINED

IN ITS

INSTRUMENTS, CAUSES, AND MANNER,

AND IN ITS

Influence on Religion, Government,

LITERATURE, AND GENERAL CIVILIZATION.

By M. J. SPALDING, D.D.

Quæcumque dixi de Tuo, Domine, agnoscant et Tui; si quæ de meo, et Tu ignosce et Tui.—*St. Augustine.*

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EXPLANATION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

The device is intended to represent Judas alone, separated from the other apostles, and standing on the side of darkness, as displeased with, and protesting against the Saviour's promise to Peter. He holds the purse which drags him backward to the edge of the precipice from which he is about to fall into the waves of perdition. Beyond him in the distance rises the *tower of opposition to the church*, or "the gates of hell"—but, broken, to signify that it cannot prevail. The cloud behind the apostles is intended as a veil that shuts from their view the future church of which the promises are now given, and which, itself, dimly appears beyond the cloud just over which is seen the gate of *the cross*, by which all must enter. This gate leads through a triple tower bearing the triangle, and representing *Three in one*. The distant temple is a hint at St. Peter's at Rome, and the three embattled fortresses on which it stands, may signify either the laity, priests and bishops, or the three orders of the hierarchy. The two flanking towers, capped with mitres, represent the episcopacy. The Holy Spirit dwells within the church, and imparts his influence to the *seven streams* which issue from the rock, and flow in a direction contrary to the spirit of the world, watering trees that produce abundance of fruit. These streams are meant for the sacraments.

To the

Rt. Rev. *Francis Patrick Kenrick*, D. D.

Bishop of Philadelphia,

These pages are Respectfully Inscribed

AS SOME

Slight Tribute to his Talents and Learning;

AND AS A

SLIGHT TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE FOR FAVORS RECEIVED:

By his former Pupil,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The following pages were written during intervals snatched from severe missionary labors. Their appearance in the present form, is at least as much the result of accident as of previous design. The writer had at first merely intended to prepare, for one of our Catholic Magazines, two or three papers, reviewing the late work of M. D'Aubigne on the Reformation. He had made considerable progress in this undertaking, before the idea of writing a book even occurred to his mind. He was, however, subsequently led to adopt this resolution, by the great extent and importance of the subject, and the utter impossibility, in which he found himself, of doing any thing like justice to it in a few brief essays. These would scarcely have afforded sufficient space to exhibit even a meagre catalogue of M. D'Aubigne's numerous omissions, blunders, and misrepresentations.

M. D'Aubigne's "History of the Great Reformation" has been widely circulated throughout the land. The edition which the writer of the present Review has used is the *fifteenth;* and it was issued in three thick volumes *duodecimo,* at a very low price. The book may be found everywhere — in the steamboat and in the hotel — in the city residence and in the country. The religionists of the day have everywhere hailed its appearance as a perfect God-send. The press and the pulpit have combined to sound its praises. And yet the work is a tissue of miserable cant and misrepresentation from beginning to

end! The reviewer hopes to make this appear by undeniable evidence, consisting of facts taken from original documents and other authentic sources. All that he asks of those who have read and admired the work of M. D'Aubigne, is to read also and to examine carefully the evidence which he has endeavored to spread before the community. To the candid of all denominations, he would beg leave to say: Hear the other side — *audi alteram partem.*

The writer has not intended to confine himself to a mere Review of M. D'Aubigne's History. He has designed to write an extended and connected essay on the Protestant reformation in Germany, examining that revolution in the character of the men who brought it about, in its causes and manner, and in its manifold influences on religion, on free government, on literature, and on general civilization. As far as this plan seemed to demand or to allow, he has, as he proceeded, availed himself of the admissions, supplied the omissions, and corrected the false statements of the Protestant historian of the reformation.

Many of the facts which he has felt it his duty to republish, from all the sources to which he could have access, exhibit painful evidences of human depravity; in those men too, who have been studiously held up as the leaders of God's people, and as the very paragons of perfection. Though the truth of history, and the necessity of doing *justice* to the reformation, required the publication of many things, which a delicate and fastidious taste would perhaps otherwise have omitted, yet the reviewer is not aware of any intention unnecessarily to shock the prejudices, much less wantonly to wound the feelings of any one. He is deeply persuaded, that Christian charity — the great queen of virtues — demands of us to have a due regard for the feelings of others; and he is thoroughly persuaded, that no one was ever

yet converted by harsh means, or by abusive language. Charity is, however, not only not incompatible with truth, but it even demands that the whole truth should be told, especially when its concealment would be a cause of error to many, in matters too of most deep and vital importance.

A full and correct history of the reformation in Germany is, it is believed, a *desideratum* in our English Catholic literature. The writer of this essay, far from flattering himself that he has supplied this deficiency, has merely wished to awaken attention to the subject. How far he has succeeded, the public will best judge. Conscious of the many imperfections of the work, he could have wished that some one more competent, and more experienced in writing, had engaged in the undertaking. To his brethren of the clergy and laity, many of whom would have been certainly better qualified than himself for the task, he would say with the old Latin poet:

"Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti: Si non, his utere mecum."

BARDSTOWN, KENTUCKY,
Feast of Christmas, 1843.

Plan of the Review.

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ERRATA.

Owing to the distance of the author's residence from the place of publication, some errors of print were unavoidable. The author, however, takes great pleasure in saying, that, having received by mail corrected proof-sheets embracing 216 pages—from page 25 to page 240—he was able to discover but few faults, most of them in proper names, or perhaps arising from mistakes in the manuscript. This remarkable correctness is ascribable to the well known accuracy of the publisher, and to the close attention of the friend who kindly superintended the publication. To both the author returns his most sincere thanks; and he begs leave also to remark, that, had his position allowed him to correct the proof-sheets himself, he would have been able to make some additions to the text, as well as several corrections in the style and phraseology. The following are the chief typographical errors alluded to.

Page 29, line 27, for *modeste* read *modiste.*
" 66, " 11, " *judgment* read *private judgment.*
" 116, " 17, " *all sins* read *all their sins.*
" " " 19, " *they* read *the latter.*
" " first note, for *serpent* read *serpunt.*
" " last note, third line from bottom, for *at* read *as.*
" 125, line 24, for *Glavis* read *Glaris.*
" 151, " 19, " *Passevin* read *Possevin.*
" 162, in the Summary, for *Munger* read *Munzer.*
" 163, and seq. in title of ch. vii, for *religion* read *doctrinal belief.*
" 215, line 16, for *preface of* read *Preface and.*
" 227, " 8, " *Brentans* read *Brentano.*
" 239, " 8, " *influenced* read *have influenced.*
" " first note, for *facts* read *faults.*

D'AUBIGNE'S

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION

REVIEWED.

INTRODUCTION.

PRINCIPAL WRITERS ON THE REFORMATION—THEIR RESPECTIVE CHARACTERS FOR RESEARCH AND VERACITY—VILLERS—ROBELOT—AUDIN—D'AUBIGNE.

I. HISTORY OF THE GREAT REFORMATION OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY IN GERMANY, SWITZERLAND, &c. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, President of the Theological School of Geneva, and member of the "Société Evangélique." 3 vols. 12mo, 15th edition. Robert Carter: N. York, 1843.

II. HISTORY OF THE LIFE, WRITINGS, AND DOCTRINES OF MARTIN LUTHER. By J. M. V. Audin. Translated from the French. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. 511. Philadelphia: M. Kelly. 1841.

III. INFLUENCE DE LA REFORMATION DE LUTHER, SUR LA CROYANCE RELIGIEUSE, LA POLITIQUE, ET LE PROGRES DES LUMIERES. Par M. Robelot, ancien chanoine de l'Eglise cathedrale de Dijon. A Lyon. 1822. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. 440. (Influence of the reformation of Luther on religious belief, on politics, and on the progress of enlightenment. By M. Robelot.)

WE have placed these three works at the head of our remarks, because they all treat of the same great religious revolution, viewed under different aspects. They all propose to exhibit to us the great drama of the sixteenth century, with its prominent actors, its numerous stirring and startling scenes, and its powerful effect on the great audience of the world. Such another drama has not been permitted by heaven, or witnessed by mankind, at any previous period of history.

The landmarks of faith, hallowed by antiquity, were then violently removed: time-honored institutions were destroyed; and new ones, exercising various influences on religion, on literature, and on government, were reared in their place. Antiquity was then decried, and innovation became the order of the day. The principles of the ancient faith having been unsettled, new doctrines, varying with the private judgment or fancy of each religionist, were zealously promulgated as the revelation of God. A vertigo seems then to have seized upon the minds of men; and its symptoms are clearly traceable in the constant uncertainty and perpetual changes of religious belief since that period. No portion of history is more worthy of our serious attention, whether we consider the interest of the facts which it discloses, or the high considerations which they involve for good or for evil.

The friends of the religious changes in question have been in the habit of styling the revolution in which they originated—"the reformation:" and it would have been strange, indeed, if they could not at least have given it a good name. The great body of Christians, who firmly believe that the change of religion was unwarranted and for the worse, have still in general employed the same term; though the word *deformation* would more accurately express their view of the subject. Of the three writers to whose works we at present invite attention, the first named is a zealous advocate of the reformation; while the two last are no less zealously opposed to its claims, either to divine origin, or to usefulness in its varied influences on mankind. It is not our purpose to give a lengthy review of their respective productions: still we must, as an introduction to our own remarks, say a few words on the general character of each; and we begin with M. Robelot, the last named.

At the beginning of the present century, the National Institute of France offered a premium for the best essay "on the character and influence of the reformation of

Luther." About the year 1802, the prize was awarded to a work by Charles Villers, "on the spirit and influence of the reformation of Luther."* This writer—an infidel in principle—labored hard to prove that the reformation has been beneficial to society, in a literary, political, and religious point of view. His essay was spirited, and adorned with all the graces of rhetoric; and it was perhaps as much to these qualities, as to the cogency of his reasoning, or the soundness of his position, that his work was indebted for the crown which it received. The French Institute had not yet recovered from the vertigo of that most disastrous revolution in France, which had but carried out the principles sustained in that of Luther. Its decision is but another of the many proofs of sympathetic feeling among errorists of every varying shade of opinion. The whole French revolution in fact had afforded numerous evidences of a kindred feeling. Though Catholics were every where proscribed and persecuted, and though Catholic priests in particular were hunted down, and butchered in multitudes; yet do we never read of *one* Protestant having been molested, or of *one* Protestant minister having suffered martyrdom for his faith, during that whole period of wide-spread desolation, of terror, and of bloodshed! Besides, the French Institute had political motives to subserve. Napoleon, then first consul, was already beginning to set up again the altars which that revolution had desecrated and thrown down. The Institute, jealous of his growing power, wished, by the decision alluded to, to oppose some counterpoise to its further increase.

An unexceptionable and very competent witness, Henry Hallam, a Protestant, pronounces the following opinion on the merits of the work of M. Villers: "The essay on the influence of the reformation by Villers, which obtained a prize from the French Institute, and has been extolled by a very friendly but better informed writer in

* "Essai Sur l'esprit et influence de la reformation de Luther." 12mo.

the Biographie Universelle, appears to me the work of a man who had not taken the pains to read any one contemporary work, or even any compilation which contains many extracts. No wonder that it does not represent, in the slightest degree, the real spirit of the times, or the tenets of the reformers. Thus, ex. gr., 'Luther,' he says, 'exposed the abuse of the traffic of indulgences, and the danger of believing that heaven and the remission of all crimes could be bought with money; while a sincere repentance and an amended life were the only means of appeasing divine justice.' (Page 65, Eng. translation.) This at least is not very like Luther's antinomian contempt for repentance and amendment of life; it might come near to the notions of Erasmus."* This is the opinion of a man, as learned as he is judicious, to whose judgment we shall have occasion frequently to appeal in the sequel.

M. Robelot's work was intended as a refutation of that by Villers. He completed it in 1807; but, owing to various petty vexations from the French police, and from the censors of the press, he was not able to publish it until 1822. See his preface, p. xiv. It evidences considerable research, is analytical and well reasoned throughout, and, what few works are, it is clear and lucid in its arrangement. The author views the Protestant reformation in its influence on religion, on government, and on literature; and shows, against the flippant assertions and flimsy arguments of Villers, that, in each of these aspects, it has proved injurious to society. The chief defects of the work are, that it is somewhat wanting in point, and rather meagre in facts. This is especially true of the second part, in which the writer discusses the political bearing of the reformation. Belonging himself, it would seem, to the political school of legitimacy, or ultra royal-

* Hallam—"Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the xv, xvi and xviith Centuries," in 2 vols. 8vo edit. Harper & Brothers: New York, 1841. Vol. i, p. 166, *note*.

ism, he labored under great disadvantage in the attempt to prove that the reformation had tended to prevent what, in his view, is the *summum bonum* of political government—a fixed and hereditary monarchy. Nothing is more certain, as we shall endeavor hereafter to establish, than that the tendency of that revolution was to crush the democratic principle, and to favor absolute systems of government. But these defects apart, the work of M. Robelot is a valuable contribution to the portion of history of which it professes to treat. Still, we look with great anxiety for the new work on the same subject promised us by M. Audin, at the close of his Life of Luther.*

This writer has labored indefatigably and successfully in elucidating the history of the reformation. To qualify himself for the task, he visited all the libraries of Europe, especially those of France, Switzerland, and Germany. He discovered many works hitherto neglected or unknown. On the theatre of the reformation itself he collected many valuable facts, picked up many incidents rich in interest, and gathered much ancient lore, based on local traditions and public monuments. His two Lives of Luther and Calvin have given to the world the results of these labors. The former has been translated into English by an accomplished clerical scholar of the United States: and so well does the English dress sit on the French author, that he does not seem ill at ease in his new garb; even the most fastidious Parisian *modèste* being judge. His style is lively, piquant, and dramatic. In fact almost the only serious fault we have to find with the work, is that the writer sometimes sacrifices the clearness and order of the narrative to its dramatic effect. He exhibits Luther in the various scenes of his private and of his public life—in his confidential conversations with his boon companions, while drinking beer with them at the "Black Eagle" of Wittemberg, as well as in his eloquent invectives from

* Page 511. The work is to be entitled: "Sur les influences de Luther."—"On the influence of Luther."

the pulpit, and his more studied harangues before the diets of the empire. So lively is the picture, that the reformer seems to reappear on the stage of life, and to act over again, before our eyes, the stirring scenes of his great drama. But what we chiefly admire, is the historian's impartiality. He gives us both sides of the question—the redeeming as well as the odious features of Luther's character: for some virtues the reformer had, even after he began the work of the reformation!

We wish we could say as much for M. D'Aubigné, the first on our list. Impartiality is not certainly a leaf in his historic crown. Finding that he hailed from Geneva, we expected to see him imbued with the deistic spirit which is now so fashionable in that former hot-bed of Calvinism. We *guessed* that he was either a German naturalist—deist—or at least—what amounts to almost the same thing—a philosopher, according to the modern French school of eclectism, a system which makes it fashionable, especially for the writer of history, to make statements on both sides of every question, with so much skill that it would require a wizard to divine his real meaning, or to define his position! But he is neither the one nor the other. He is a Protestant of the olden type: there is more of fanaticism than of indifferentism in his complexion. His spirit is worthy that of Luther, though his manner of showing it is a little softened down, to suit modern taste.

He is a partisan of the most violent stamp. And yet he seeks to mislead his readers in the very first lines of his preface. "The work I have undertaken," he begins, "is not the history of a party. It is the history of one of the greatest revolutions ever effected in human affairs—the history of a mighty impulse communicated to the world three centuries ago—and of which the operation is every where discernible in our own days. The history of the reformation is altogether distinct from the history of Protestantism. In the former all bears the character of a regeneration of human nature, a religious and social

transformation emanating from God himself. In the latter we see too often a glaring depravation of first principles—the conflict of parties—a sectarian spirit—and the operation of private interests."

It is very convenient at least to separate the history of the reformation from that of Protestantism: it saves the writer much perplexing labor. But the separation is unnatural and illogical. We cannot judge properly of a cause without witnessing its necessary effects. As well might we undertake to give the natural history of the tree without speaking of its fruits; or to paint the dreadful hurricane without alluding to the ruins which it left in its course. It is a divine maxim to judge the tree by its fruits. This principle once admitted, it requires a large amount of credulity to believe that a "transformation emanated from God himself," the fruits of which were avowedly "a depravation of first principles—the conflict of parties—a sectarian spirit—and the operation of private interests:" and he might have added: sects innumerable of every motley hue—endless variations in religious belief—a breaking up of all unity of faith by warring creeds—and the loss of all settled belief, with the sacrifice of charity! These are the natural and necessary fruits of the reformation, according to the stern evidence of facts. Protestantism is the best and the only authentic commentary on the reformation.

He exhibits himself the partisan throughout his entire history. On every page he manifests his partiality. Else why does he so incessantly miscolor or suppress facts? Why does he omit almost every thing that could compromise the character of the reformers, or vindicate that of their opponents? To select a few out of a hundred instances, why does he give us only nine of the more odious, out of more than fifty of the Theses, or Propositions, of Tetzel,* while he gives those of Luther entire? Why does he make the learned and amiable Cardinal Cajetan

* Vol. i, pp. 269-70.

appear so supremely ridiculous in his interview with Luther?* Why does he labor to vindicate Luther and the reformers in every thing, either wholly suppressing their many glaring faults, or maliciously ascribing them to a remnant of "popish superstition," as when he so *gently* alludes to the reformer's famous "conference with the devil" at the castle of Wartburg, in 1521?† Why does he, on the other hand, ascribe all the actions of the popes, and of Catholic prelates, who came into collision with the reformers, to wicked cunning and malicious *finesse?* Why bring his preconceived theory to bear on every fact of his history? Is all this, and much more that might be alleged, no evidence of partisanship? If he sought to be really impartial, why rely, for almost all his statements, upon the testimony of the most decided partisans—of Luther, Melancthon, Mathesius, Seckendorf, and others? And why suppress even the better half of the testimony of these partial witnesses? We shall take occasion to supply many of his omissions, as we proceed, as well as to correct many of his misrepresentations.

His history, as far as it is comprised in the three volumes which we have seen, is very incomplete, embracing only the first eight years of the reformation, and closing a few months after the diet of Augsburg, which was held in December, 1525. His style is lively, and his narrative interesting and abounding in incident. It would be perhaps an agreeable romance, but for the insufferable cant with which it is overcharged. What cool assurance in the false statements, repeated *usque ad nauseam*—that the Catholic church did not know the Gospel, until Luther revealed this hitherto hidden treasure—that she denied the merits of Christ, the necessity of faith and grace for justification—and many other such absurdities! And yet, upon these unfounded allegations, which he reiterates without a shadow of evidence, his entire history is based! He is no partisan, forsooth!

* Vol. i, 350 *seqq.*

† Vol. iii, 40.

His theory of Christianity is not new. It pursues the same old beaten track of error. He develops it in his preface and in his first book;* and makes all his subsequent history bend to its maxims. He very conveniently narrows down the whole Christian system to two cardinal principles: 1st, perfect equality among Christians, based on the supremacy of private judgment, to the exclusion of authoritative teaching; and, 2d, salvation by faith alone without works, and by grace without human merit. "The church," he says, "was in the beginning a community of brethren. All its members were taught of God; and each possessed the liberty of drawing for himself from the fountain of life."† Again: "as soon as salvation was taken out of the hands of God, it fell into the hands of the priests. The latter put themselves in the place of the Lord; and the souls of men, thirsting for pardon, were no longer taught to look to heaven, but to the church, and especially to its pretended head."‡

Throughout the whole first book he labors to prove that the Catholic church trampled on these two principles. "Christianity had declined, because the two guiding truths of the new covenant had been lost."§ The papacy arose in the "dark" ages by a series of usurpations—the whole church bowed to the tyranny, and fell into fatal error: "the living church retiring by degrees to the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary souls."‖ "Works of penance, substituted for the salvation of God, multiplied in the church from the time of Tertullian to the thirteenth century."¶ Tertullian, he tells us, towards the close of the second century had said: "it is necessary to change our dress and food, we must put on sackcloth and ashes, we must renounce all comfort and adorning of the body, and, falling down before the priest, implore the intercession of the brethren."** Rank popery

* Vol. i, from p. 15 to p. 118. † Vol. i, p. 17. ‡ Vol. i, p. 34.
§ Vol. i, p. 68. ‖ Vol. i, p. 20. ¶ Vol. i, p. 35. ** Ibid.

even in the second century! Only think of such things being "necessary" for Protestants of M. D'Aubigné's delicate nerve! These same works of penance never were fashionable among Protestants: they went out of vogue through the glorious "emancipation of the human mind" by Luther! *He* pointed out an easier way to heaven!

M. D'Aubigné winds up his long-winded string of assertions by these remarkable antitheses, which contain the gist of his theory. "Popery interposes the church between God and man: Christianity and the reformation bring God and man face to face. Popery separates man from God: the gospel reunites them."* He then brings up, as witnesses of the truth against Rome, all the drivelling sectaries of the middle ages—Claudius of Turin, Peter de Bruys, Peter Waldo, Wicliffe, and Huss.† He sneers at the Catholic church for teaching "that the sinner is justified by faith and by works:"‡ and yet St. James teaches the self-same doctrine in almost the same identical words;§ and for his teaching thus, Luther recklessly rejected his Epistle "as one of straw, and unworthy of an apostle!"

In the midst of all his rant, he however occasionally, at lucid intervals, waxes wonderfully liberal. "But first," says he, "let us do justice to that church of the middle age, which intervened between the age of the apostles and the reformers. The church was still the church, although fallen, and more and more enslaved. (!) In a word, she was at all times the most powerful friend of man. Her hands, though manacled, still dispensed blessings. Many eminent servants of Christ diffused through these ages a beneficent light," &c.‖ Among these eminent servants of God, he names a poor Carthusian monk, brother Martin, who confessed that Christ had redeemed him, and hid away his confession in a box, which was

* Vol. i, pp. 39-40. † Vol. i, p. 70 *seqq.* ‡ Vol. i, p. 33.
§ St. James II, 14-17. ‖ Vol. i, p. 40.

wonderfully discovered on the 21st December, 1776, in taking down the wall of an old convent!* We could point him to a thousand and one other witnesses in the church of the middle age, who taught this same doctrine, and, along with it, more maxims of piety than M. D'Aubigné "ever dreamed of in his philosophy." Let him but read Digby's "Ages of Faith," in five large octavo volumes, which is a tissue of such heavenly maxims borrowed from the middle ages. Let him read the works of Thomas à Kempis, of St. Bernard, of St. Bonaventure, of St. Anselm, of St. Thomas Aquinas, and of others. Luckily, *their* confessions are not hidden in a box! And we defy him or any one else to prove that the Catholic church ever taught that man can be saved without faith or without grace. She has invariably taught the precise contrary, against the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian heresies, which she has always proscribed.

Palmer, a Protestant writer, bears the following evidence to the faith of the Catholic church on this subject: "During the period now under consideration (from 1054 to the reformation) all the most learned and eminent theologians of the western church continued to believe that man *cannot merit salvation by his own works*, but that he must place his whole trust and confidence in the mercy of God, and the atonement, merits, and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ." Compendious Ecclesiastical History, p. 114. N. York, 1841.

M. D'Aubigné devoutly believes that the reformation was the direct work of God, and that the reformers were chosen instruments of heaven for bringing it about. He is certainly not wanting in faith to believe all this. Pity he did not attempt to show which of the many contradictory systems of reform was the work of God; or which of the jarring sects, to which that revolution gave rise, carried out the design of God. We apprehend that

* Vol. i, p. 73.

God could not sanction contradictions. But we forget—M. D'Aubigné has anticipated this difficulty: he is not writing the history of Protestantism—not he. He pities the "perverseness of the human heart," which led the great Bossuet to write his history "of the variations of the Protestant churches!" He is too practised to undertake any such thorny work! Were he to write a volume on each of the Protestant sects, with a separate chapter to give an account of every successive change of belief by each sect, his lifetime would not suffice to complete the history. New volumes and new chapters should be daily added to the work, until at last "the world would scarcely contain the books that would be written!" "Calvin was wise for not writing on the Apocalypse;"* and his disciple, D'Aubigné, shows similar sagacity in not attempting to write the history of Protestantism!

We propose to examine in a series of chapters whether the reformation was really the work of God; and whether it has been of real benefit to mankind? And that our readers may the more readily follow our line of argument, we think it better to advise them—though formal divisions are growing unfashionable in this frivolous age—that we shall inquire;—

I. Whether the men who brought about the reformation in Germany were such as God could or would have employed to do his work?

II. Whether the motives which prompted, and the means which were employed to accomplish that revolution, were such as God could sanction?

III. Whether the reformation really effected a reform in religion and in morals?

And IV, whether its influence was beneficial to society, by developing the principles of free government, and promoting literature and civilization?

Our inquiry will be chiefly confined to Germany, Swit-

* "Calvinus sapuit quia non scripsit in Apocalypsim." Scaliger.

zerland, and the northern kingdoms of Europe; and we propose to avail ourselves of the authority of M. D'Aubigné, and to refute his false statements, as we advance; so far at least as the train of our remarks may seem to call for, or to warrant.

Part I.

CHAPTER I.

CHARACTER OF THE REFORMERS.

M. D'Aubigné's opinion—A reformed key—Luther's parents—His early training—A naughty boy—Convents—Being "led to God," and "not led to God"—He enters the Augustinian convent—Austerities—A "bread bag"—His faith and scruples—His humility and zeal—Luther a reformer—Grows worse—Becomes reckless—His sincerity tested—Saying and unsaying—Misgivings—Tortuous windings—How to spite the Pope—Curious incident—Melancthon and his mother—Luther's talents and eloquence—His taste—His courage and fawning—His violence and coarseness—Not excusable by the spirit of his age—His blasphemies—Recrimination—Christian compliments—"Conference with the devil"—Which got the better of the argument—Luther's morality—Table-talk—His sermon on marriage—A Vixen—How to do "mischief to the Pope"—A striking contrast—How to fulfil vows—His marriage—Misgivings—Epigrams and satires—Curious incidents in his last sickness—Death-bed confession—His death—The reformed key used—Character of the other reformers.

M. D'Aubigne compares the reformers to the Apostles;* and his favorite theory is, that the reformation itself was but "the reappearance of Christianity."† Speaking of the life and character of Luther, he says "the whole reformation was there."‡ "The different phases of this work succeeded each other in the mind of him who was to be the instrument for it, before it was publicly accomplished in the world. The knowledge of the reformation effected in the heart of Luther himself is, in truth, the key to the reformation of the church."§

* B. ii, p. 118, vol. i. † Pref. iv. ‡ Vol. i, p. 118. § Ibid

We will abide by this test. We will examine for a brief space the external form, and the internal structure—the many tortuous turnings and intricate wards of this "key" of the Protestant reformation; and we will be enabled to estimate the character of the latter,—which, as we hope to show, was a "lock on the understanding"—from the properties of the former. Dropping the figure, we will compare the character of Luther while he continued a Catholic, during the first thirty-four years of his life, with what it subsequently became after he had turned reformer, or for the last twenty-nine years of his life—from 1517 to 1546. If we ascertain that his own character underwent a change greatly for the worse during the latter period, we will be compelled, by M. D'Aubigné's own rule, to admit that the general tendency of the reformation was evil.

To facilitate the understanding of our remarks, and to obviate repetition, we here state that Luther was born at Eisleben, in Saxony, on the 10th of November, 1483—that he attended successively the schools of Mansfeld, Magdeburg, and Eisenach, and completed his education in the university of Erfurth—that he was ordained priest in 1506, turned reformer in 1517, was married in 1525, and died on the 17th of Feb. 1546, in the 63d year of his age.

While under the influence of the Catholic church, he was probably a very good man—he was certainly a very bad one after he left the church. His parents were poor, but they seem to have been pious, especially his mother. From an early age, they labored to train him up in sentiments of piety, as well as to imbue his mind with the elements of learning. "As soon as he was old enough to receive instruction," says M. D'Aubigné, "his parents endeavored to communicate to him the knowledge of God, to train him in his fear, and to form him to the practice of the Christian virtues. They applied the utmost care to his earliest domestic education.* He was taught the heads

* D'Aubigné i, 122.

of the catechism, the ten commandments, the Apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer, some hymns, some forms of prayer, a Latin grammar composed in the fourth century by Donatus; in a word, all that was studied in the Latin school of Mansfeld."* In the good old Catholic times, then, parents knew their duty to their children, and people were not so stupidly ignorant after all!

Luther seems to have been a very naughty boy; for while at school in Mansfeld, "his master flogged him fifteen times in one day;"† and, in his after-life, he was wont to complain of the cruel treatment he received from his parents. "My parents treated me cruelly, so that I became very timid: one day, for a mere trifle, my mother whipped me till the blood came. They truly thought they were doing right; but they had no discernment of character, which is yet absolutely necessary, that we may know when, on whom, and how, punishment should be inflicted."‡ His parents acted on the old maxim; "spare the rod and spoil the child"—and if he was subsequently so much spoiled, even with all the previous training of the rod, what would he have been without its salutary restraint?

Though "it appears that the child was not yet led to God,"§ still he evinced a great fund of piety. "But even at this early age, the young man of eighteen did not study merely with a view of cultivating his understanding; there was within him a serious thoughtfulness, a heart looking upwards, which God gives to those whom he designs to make his most zealous servants. Luther felt that he depended entirely on God,—a simple and powerful conviction, which is at once a principle of deep humility, and an incentive to great undertakings. He fervently invoked the Divine blessing upon his labors. Every morning he began the day with prayer; then he went to church;

* D'Aubigné i, p. 123. † Ibid. ‡ Luth. Opp. Wittemb. xxii, 1785.
§ D'Aubigné i, p. 123.

afterwards he commenced his studies, and he never lost a moment in the course of the day. 'To pray well,' he was wont to say, 'was the better half of study.'"* This looked a little like being "led to God."

On the 17th of August, 1505, he entered into the Augustinian convent at Erfurth, being then in the 22d year of his age. He was induced to take this important step by a vow he had made to consecrate himself entirely to God, in case of his deliverance from a terrific storm, by which he was overtaken near Erfurth, and in which, according to one account,† his friend Alexis was stricken dead by lightning at his side. "At length he is with God," says M. D'Aubigné. "His soul is safe. He is now to obtain that holiness he so ardently desired."‡ The monasteries were then not so bad as Protestants would fain represent them. "They often contained Christian virtues"—M. D'Aubigné himself tells us—"which grew up beneath the shelter of a salutary retirement; and which if they had been brought forth to view, would have been the admiration of the world. They who possessed these virtues, living only with each other and with God, drew no attention from without, and were often unknown even to the small convent in which they were inclosed—their life was known only to God."§

Luther entered the convent with the purest motives, and labored in it to overcome himself by mortification and self-denial, and to acquire humility and all the Christian virtues. "But it was not to gain the credit of being a great genius that he entered the cloister; it was to find the aliments of piety to God."‖ The monks "imposed on him the meanest offices." They perhaps wished to humble the doctor of philosophy, and to teach him that his learning did not raise him above his brethren. . . . The for-

* Mathesius 3, apud D'Aub. i, 130.

† Discredited, perhaps with reason, by D'Aubigné (ibid. p. 135, *note*.)

‡ Ibid. p. 136. § Ibid. p. 146-7. ‖ Ibid. p. 141.

mer master of arts was obliged to perform the functions of door-keeper, to open and shut the gates, to wind up the clock, to sweep the church, to clean the rooms. Then, when the poor monk, who was at once porter, sexton, and servant of the cloister, had finished his work—"*cum sacco per civitatem*"—"with your bag through the town!" cried the brothers; and, loaded with his bread bag, he was obliged to go through the streets of Erfurth, begging from house to house, and perhaps at the doors of those very persons who had been either his friends or his inferiors. But he bore it all. Inclined from his natural disposition, to devote himself heartily to whatever he undertook, it was with his whole soul that he had become a monk. Besides, could he wish to spare the body? To regard the satisfying of the flesh? Not thus could he acquire the humility, the holiness he had come to seek within the walls of a cloister."* How does this spirit of self-denial, contrast with the gross self-indulgence of his subsequent life, when he had thrown off all those antiquated trammels! Well does his panegyrist remark, that "there was then in Luther little of that which made him in after-life the reformer of the church."† As we shall see, this remark is strikingly true.

He received ordination with fear and trembling at his own unworthiness. So great was his awe of the holy sacrament, that in a procession at Eisleben, on the feast of *Corpus Christi*, he almost fainted through overpowering reverence for Christ truly present.‡ He was scrupulous to a fault. He frequently gave way to fits of despondency and melancholy, which were with difficulty removed. As a panacea for his troubled mind, an aged monk called his attention to that article of the Apostles' creed in which we profess to believe, "in the forgiveness of sins."§ The humble confidence in our forgiveness through God's mer-

* Ibid. p. 139. † Ibid. p. 138. ‡ Ibid. p. 157. § Ibid. p. 154.

cy, which this article is so well calculated to inspire, was afterwards reduced by the reformer to an absolute and infallible certainty, that his own sins were forgiven. So apt are men to run into extremes, especially those who are addicted to scruples! When these are removed—as was unhappily the case with Luther—they too often are exchanged for the opposite extreme of wanton recklessness. This remark is a key to the reformer's subsequent life.

His deep humility caused him to shrink from the office of preaching. It was with great difficulty that Staupitz, his superior, could overcome this reluctance. "In vain Staupitz entreated him: 'No, no,' replied he, 'it is no light thing to speak to men in God's stead.'" "An affecting instance of humility in this great reformer of the church,"* adds M. D'Aubigné. He unhappily gave no evidence of any such spirit, after he had turned reformer, as we shall see presently. Had he always preserved this Christian spirit, the peace of the church would in all probability never have been disturbed.

In 1516, but one year before the commencement of the reformation, Staupitz directed him to make the visitation of the forty convents belonging to the Augustinian Order in Germany.† He discharged this difficult office with singular prudence and zeal. He every where reformed abuses, gave salutary counsels, and animated the monks to the practice of every virtue. A little later, he gave additional evidence of Christian humility. Having received a new gown from the elector Frederick of Saxony, he thus wrote to Spalatin, the elector's secretary. "It would be too fine if it were not a prince's gift. I am not worthy that any man should think of me, much less a prince, and so noble a prince. Those are most useful to me who think worst of me. Present my thanks to our prince for his favor, but know that I desire neither the praises of thy-

* Ibid. p. 161. † Ib. p. 191, seqq.

self nor of others: all the praise of man is vain, the praise that cometh from God being alone true."*

He was no less zealous and devoted than he was humble. When the plague broke out in Wittemburg, in 1516, his friends advised him to fly from a malady which swept off whole multitudes. Luther answered: "you advise me to flee—but whither shall I flee? I hope the world will not go to pieces, if brother Martin should fall. If the plague spreads, I will send the brethren away in all directions; but for my part, I am placed here: obedience does not allow me to leave the spot, until He who called me hither, shall call me away."† He did not behave thus courageously, when the pest again visited Wittemberg, after he had left the church; he then stated that the minister of God fulfilled his duty, if he administered the sacraments to his flock once or twice in the year; and that it was an intolerable burden to be under the obligation to do more, especially in time of plague!

Such was Luther before he began the reformation in 1517. How changed, alas! was he after this period—*heu! quantùm mutatus ab illo!* He is no longer the humble monk, the scrupulous priest, the fervent Christian, that he was before! Amidst the storm which he excited, he gradually suffered shipwreck of almost every virtue, and became reckless and depraved—the mere creature of impulse, the child of pride, the victim of violent and degrading passion! We trust to make all this appear from certain and undoubted facts, which no one can deny. And the result of our reasoning will be the irresistible conclusion, that for him at least, the reformation was a down-hill business: and, according to M. D'Aubigné's test, that this was its general tendency.

His own deterioration, and the work of the reformation were both gradual—they went hand in hand. He did not

* *Lutheri Epistolæ* edit. Wette. 1. 45, 46.: apud D'Aubigné 1, 195.
† Epist. 1, 42. 26 Oct. 1516. Apud D'Aub. 1, 194.

at first seem to aim at any change in the doctrines and institutions of the Catholic church: this thought was developed only afterwards. In the 38th, 67th, and 71st of his famous 95 *theses* published against Tetzel on the 1st of Nov. 1517, he expressly maintained the authority of the Pope, and the Catholic doctrine on indulgences. He professed only to aim at the correction of abuses.

It is a mooted question, whether jealousy of the Dominican order, which had been entrusted with the preaching of the indulgences, to the exclusion of his own rival order of the Augustinians, influenced him in his first attack on Tetzel. Such seems to have been the opinion of the enlightened pontiff Leo X, who, when the controversy was first reported to him, remarked, smiling, "that it was all a mere monkish squabble originating in jealousy."* Such also was the opinion of many other ancient writers. Certain it is that this jealousy, if it did not originate, at least fed and maintained the discussion. Luther's order, with its principal members—Staupitz, Link, Lange, and others—were his warmest advocates; while the Dominicans—Cajetan, Hochstraet, Eck, and Prierias—were his chief opponents. The Dominican order continued faithful to the church; the Augustinians of Germany abandoned it almost without an exception.

Had he paused at the proper time, had he continued to leave untouched the venerable landmarks of Catholic faith, and confined himself to the correction of local disorders, all Catholics would have applauded his zeal. Instead of being reckoned with Arius, Pelagius, Wicliffe, and other heresiarchs, he would then have found a niche in the temple of Catholic fame, with an Ambrose and a Gregory VII, and a Bernard! His great talents, properly regulated, might have been immensely beneficial to the church of God. But, standing on the brink of a preci-

* *Che coteste erano invidie fratesche.* Brandelli, a cotemporary Dominican writer. *Hist. Trag. pars* 3.

pice, he became dizzy, and fell; and, like Lucifer of old, he drew after him one-third of the stars of God's kingdom on earth! The old Catholic tree bore some evil fruits of abuses—generally local and unauthorized, as we shall see in the proper place—and, instead of pruning it discreetly and nurturing its growth, he recklessly lopped off all its branches, and even attempted to tear it up by the roots, under the pretext, forsooth, of making it bear fruit!!

The question has often been asked,—was Luther sincere? We have no doubt of his sincerity nor of his piety, until he turned reformer. Perhaps, too, he might have been sincere during the first year or two of his reformative career. God, only, can judge his heart; and it would be rash in us to attempt to fathom, what only He can search with unerring accuracy. Still we have some facts whereon to base a judgment in the matter. There is little doubt that he had some misgivings at first. He himself tells us that "he trembled to find himself alone against the whole church."* He himself testifies on this subject as follows: "How often has my conscience disturbed me! How often have I said to myself: dost thou imagine thyself wiser than all the rest of mankind? Darest thou imagine that all mankind has been in error for so long a series of years."† And again: "I am not so bold as to assert that I have been guided in this affair by God—upon this point I would not wish to undergo the judgment of God."‡

He regretted at first, that his *Theses* had become so public, and had made so great a stir among the people. "My design," says he, "was not to make them so public. I wished to discuss the various points comprised in them with some of our associates and neighbors. If they had condemned them, I would have destroyed them; if they had approved of them, I would have published them."§

* "*Solus primò eram.*" Opp. in Præf. Edit. Wittenb.
† Opp. Lutheri. Germ. Edit. Geneva, vol. ii, fol. 9. ‡ Ib. vol. i, 364.
§ Epist. Collect. Wette, I, p. 95.

"He was disturbed and dejected at the thought"—of standing alone against the church—"doubts which he thought he had overcome, returned to his mind with fresh force. He trembled to think that he had the whole authority of the church against him. To withdraw himself from that authority—to resist that voice which nations and ages had humbly obeyed—to set himself in opposition to that church which he had been accustomed from his infancy to revere as the mother of the faithful: he, a despicable monk—it was an effort beyond human power."*

Luther himself tells us how he struggled against this feeling—how he lulled to rest that still small voice of conscience within his bosom. "After having triumphed, by means of the Scriptures, over all opposing arguments, I at last overcame, by the grace of Christ (!) with much anguish, labor, and great difficulty, the only argument that still stopped me, namely, '*that I must hear the church;*' for, from my heart, I honored the church of the Pope as the true church," &c.† He foresaw the dreadful commotions of which he would be the author, and trembled at the thought! "I tremble—I shudder at the thought, that I may be an occasion of discord to such mighty princes."‡ Still he recklessly persevered!

But these scruples were but "a remnant of popery:" soon he succeeded in lulling his conscience into a fatal security. An awful calm succeeded the storm. The pride of being at the head of a strong party—the praises of the students and professors of the Wittemberg university—the flattery of friends, and the smiles of the powerful elector of Saxony—soon quieted the qualms of conscience. The following facts—selected almost at random from a mass of evidence of the same kind—may contribute to throw additional light on the question of his sincerity.

* D'Aubigné i, 257. † Luth. Opp. Lat. i, 49.

‡ "*Inter tantos principes dissidii origo esse valde horreo et timeo.*" Ep. i, 93.

On the 30th of May, 1518, Trinity Sunday, he wrote a letter to Leo X, of which the following is the concluding passage: "Therefore, most holy father, I throw myself at the feet of your holiness, and submit myself to you with all that I have and all that I am. Destroy my cause or espouse it; pronounce either for or against me; take my life or restore it, as you please: I will receive your voice as that of Christ himself, who presides and speaks through you. If I have deserved death, I refuse not to die: the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. May he be praised for ever and ever. May he maintain you to all eternity! Amen."* The sequel tested the sincerity of this declaration. But even while he was penning it, or very shortly after, he preached from the pulpit of Wittemberg against the power of the pope to fulminate excommunication, and he was engaged in circulating inflammatory tracts breathing the same spirit.†

In 1519 he had a conference with Miltitz, the papal envoy, to whose perfect satisfaction he arranged every thing, promising to keep silence in future, as to the questions in controversy. The good nuncio embraced him, wept with joy, and invited him to a banquet, at which he loaded him with caresses. While this scene was being acted, Luther, in a private letter to a friend, called him "a deceiver, a liar, who parted from him with a Judas-like kiss and crocodile tears;"‡ and, in another letter, to Spalatin, he wrote: "let me whisper in your ear; I do not know whether the pope is Antichrist, or only his apostle,"§ &c. And yet, at this very time, on the 3d March, 1519, he wrote to the pope in these words:

* Luth. Epist. vol. i, p. 121. Edit. Wette.

† "*Habui nuper sermonem ad populum de virtute excommunicationis, ubi taxavi obiter tyrannidem et inscitiam sordidissimi illius vulgi officialium commissariorum vicariorum,*" &c. Epist. ad Wencesl. Link, Julii, 1518. ‡ Epist. Sylvio Egrano, 2 Feb. 1519

§ Epist. Spalatino, 12 Feb. 1519. See Audin, Life of Luther, p. 91, and D'Aubigné ii, 15, 16.

"Most holy father, I declare it in the presence of God, and of all the world, I never have sought, nor will I ever seek to weaken by force or artifice the power of the Roman church or of your holiness. I confess that there is nothing in heaven or earth that should be preferred above that church, save only Jesus Christ the Lord of all."* The same man who wrote this, impugned the primacy of the pope the very same year in the famous discussion with Doctor Eck at Leipsic! Was he—could he be sincere in all this? But, farther, when on the 3d of Oct. 1520, he became acquainted with the bull of Leo X, by which his doctrines were condemned, he wrote these remarkable words: "I will treat it as a forgery, though I know it to be genuine."†

The following evidence will greatly aid us in judging of the motives which guided Luther in the work of the reformation. What those motives were he surely was the best judge. Let us then see what himself tells us on this subject. In his famous harangue against Karlstadt and the image breakers, delivered from the pulpit of the church of All Saints at Wittemberg, he plainly says that, if his recreant disciples will not take his advice, "he will not hesitate to retract every thing he had either taught or written, and leave them;" and he adds emphatically: "this I tell you once for all."‡ In an abridged confession of faith, which he drew up for his partisans, he says in a vaunting tone: "I abolished the elevation of the host, to spite the pope; and I had retained it so long to spite Karlstadt."§ In the new form of service, which he composed as a substitute for the mass, he says in a similar spirit: "if a council were to order the communion to be taken in both kinds, he and his would only take it in one or none; and would, moreover, curse all those who

* Epist. i, p. 234. † D'Aubigné ii, 128.

‡ "Non dubitabo funem reducere, et omnium quæ aut scripsi aut docui palinodiam canere: hoc vobis dictum esto." *Sermo docens abusus non manibus*, &c. § Confessio Parva.

should, in conformity with this decree of the council, communicate in both kinds."* Could the man be sincere who openly boasted of being governed by such motives?

We might continue to discuss the question of his sincerity, by showing how he said one thing to Cardinal Cajetan, and in the diet of Worms in 1521, and other things precisely contradictory to his friends, at the same time: how, before Cajetan, he appealed first to the universities,† then to the pope, better informed,‡ and subsequently to a general council:§ and how, when all these tribunals had decided against him, he would abide by none of their decisions, his reiterated solemn promises to the contrary notwithstanding! Did the Spirit of God direct him in all these tortuous windings of artful policy? Do they manifest aught of the uprightness of a boasted apostle? Do they not rather bespeak the wily heresiarch—an Arius, a Nestorius, or a Pelagius?

We say nothing at present of his consistency: we speak only of his sincerity and common honesty. No one ever praised his consistency: he was confessedly a mere creature of impulse and of passion, constant in nothing but in his hatred of the pope and of the Catholic church. His inconsistencies would fill a volume, and a mere allusion to them would swell this chapter to an unwarrantable length.‖

But there is one incident in the private life of Luther too curious to be passed over in silence. We give it in the words of M. Audin, with his references to cotemporary historians. "After the labors of the day, he would walk with Catharine"—the nun whom he had wedded—"in the little garden of the convent, near the ponds in

* Forma Missæ.

† D'Aubigné i, 357.

‡ Id. i, 376.

§ Id. i, 389, and again, ii, 134.

‖ Those who may be curious to investigate this subject will find abundant facts in "Audin's Life of Luther." We direct the attention of such to the following pages: 81, 82, 85, 94, 95, 102, 110, 354, 472, 238, 239, 240, 291, 312, 397, 398, 410, 430, 511, &c. &c.

which colored fish were disporting; and he loved to explain to her the wonders of the creation, and the goodness of Him who had made it with his hands. One evening the stars sparkled with unwonted brightness, and the heavens appeared to be on fire. 'Behold what splendor those luminous points emit,' said Catharine to Luther. Luther raised his eyes. 'What glorious light,' said he: '*it shines not for us.*' 'Why not?' replied Bora; 'have we lost our title to the kingdom of heaven?' Luther sighed—'Perhaps so,' said he, 'because we have abandoned our state.' 'We ought to return to it, then,' said Catharine. '*It is too late—the car is sunk too deeply,*' added the doctor. The conversation dropped."*

We may here be pardoned for making a digression, to relate a somewhat analogous incident of Melancthon, Luther's bosom friend and cherished disciple. Luther was wont to flatter him immoderately, and the grateful disciple repaid him with interest in the same gilded coin. When he had finished his *Scholia* on the Epistles of St. Paul, Luther said to him, after having read the work: "What matter is it whether it pleases you or not, if it pleases me? I tell you that the commentaries of Origen and Jerome, compared with yours, are nothing but absurdities."† Melancthon too had his misgivings. "He recalled to his mind the image of his old father, George Schwartzerd, the smith, whose lively faith made him rise often at night to offer up his prayer to God. He thought of the last prayer of his dying mother, who, raising her hands towards him, said: 'My son, it is for the last time you see your mother. I am about to die: your turn will one day come, when you must render an account of your actions to your Judge. You know that I was a Catholic, and that you have induced me to abandon the religion of my fathers. Tell

* Georg Joanneck—*Norma Vitæ.* Kraus—Ovicul. part ii, fol. 39. Apud Audin, p. 382.

† Apud Audin, p. 445.

me now, for God's sake, in what religion I ought to die.' Melancthon answered: 'Mother, the new doctrine is the more convenient; the other is the more secure.'"* But the gentle and wavering Melancthon was kept in error by the fascination of Luther, who, serpent-like, had coiled himself around his very heart-strings, and held him captive!

Luther's intellectual attainments were of a high order. As a popular orator, few surpassed him in ancient or modern times. Nothing could withstand the foamy torrent of his eloquence, or resist the effect of his withering invective. "When he preached, the people listened with trembling expectation to the words which fell from his lips. His eye, which seemed to revolve in a fiery orbit—his large and seer-like forehead—his animated figure, especially when much excited—his threatening gesture, his loud voice which thundered on the ear—the spirit of inspiration with which he seemed possessed—all awakened either terror, or ecstatic admiration in his auditory."†

An excellent judge, Frederick Von Schlegel, passes the following opinion on his mental powers. "In the first place, it is evident of itself that a man who accomplished so mighty a revolution in the human mind, and in his age, could have been endowed with no common powers of intellect, and no ordinary strength of character. Even his writings display an astonishing boldness and energy of thought, united with a spirit of impetuous, passionate, and convulsive enthusiasm. The latter qualities are indeed not very compatible with a prudent, enlightened, and dispassionate judgment."‡

His indefatigable industry and untiring energy brought out all his mental resources. He was restless and disquieted: his spirit could never be still, after it had lost

* Ægidius Albertinus *im* 4. *Theil des Deutchen Lust Hauses*, v. 143. Apud Audin, p. 447, *note*.

† Audin, p. 225.

‡ Philosophy of History, vol. ii, p. 204.

the peace it once possessed in the bosom of the Catholic church. His mind was not elevated or refined; it could not appreciate the beauties of art in Rome, which he visited during the splendid pontificate of Leo X. He seems to have gleaned nothing else from his journey to the "eternal city" but a few "house-wife stories or mendacious anecdotes."*

Much has been said of his courage, and of his disregard of danger. That he was bold and daring, we do not pretend to deny. It however required but little courage to be bold in his interview with Cajetan, or at the diet of Worms in 1521. With the safe-conduct of the emperor, and the certain protection of the powerful elector of Saxony, he had little to apprehend. Besides, any man might become courageous, at least at times, who had a powerful party to sustain him in every thing. Luther was certainly most courageous where there was least danger. He is altogether a different character at the diet of Worms and at Wittemberg. He could hurl defiance at popes, emperors, and princes, when these were far off, and he was out of their reach: but if he had any thing to fear from them, the scene changed altogether. He became as obsequious and crouching as he had before been bold and reckless.

How meanly sycophantic was he on all occasions to the elector of Saxony! We will give one instance of this. When Henry VIII, of England, complained to the elector of Luther's outrageous insults to his royal majesty, the elector barely intimated the fact in a very mild and indirect way to the reformer, without even insinuating the propriety of making any reparation. Luther seized his pen, and indited the following singular *amende honorable*. "Most serene king! most illustrious prince! I should be afraid to address your majesty, when I remember how much I must have offended you in the book which, under the influence of bad advice, rather than of my own feel-

* See Audin, p. 135, for facts under this head.

ings, I published against you, through pride and vanity. . . . I blush now, and scarcely dare to raise my eyes to you—I, who, by means of these workers of iniquity, have not feared to insult so great a prince—I, who am a worm and corruption, and who only merit contempt and disdain. . . . If your majesty thinks proper that, in another work, I should recall my words, and glorify your name, vouchsafe to transmit to me your orders. I am ready and full of good will,"* &c. In fact, as we shall hereafter prove, Luther was indebted, in a great measure, to his sycophancy to princes for the success of his pretended reformation.

His passions were violent, and he seems to have made little effort to govern them. His violence in fact often drove him to the very verge of insanity. His cherished disciple, Melancthon, deplored his furious outbursts of temper. "I tremble when I think of the passions of Luther: they yield not in violence to the passions of Hercules."† The weak and timid disciple had reason to tremble; for he testifies that Luther occasionally inflicted on him personal chastisement.‡

If he thus treated his most intimate friends, what are we to suppose his conduct was towards his opponents and enemies? In his conferences with Cajetan and Miltitz, and in his letter to Leo X, as well as in his famous speech at Worms, he acknowledged the violence of his writings. Still, instead of correcting this fault, it seems to have grown with his growth. Hear the manner in which he replies to Tetzel. "It seems to me, at the sound of these invectives, that I hear a great ass braying at me. I rejoice at it, and should be sorry that such people should call me a good Christian."§

* Opp. Lutheri, Tom. ix, p. 234. Cochlæus, p. 156, Ulenberg, p. 502. See Audin, p. 300.

† Melancthon Epist. ad Theodorum.

‡ "*Ab ipso colaphos accepi*" Epist. ad eundem.

§ Luth. Opp. Leipsic, xvii, 132.

He exhausts all the epithets of the coarsest ribaldry against his opponents, no matter how respectable. We cannot pollute our pages with a tithe of his foul language. Behold the spirit that breathes in the following passage, in which he speaks of Emser: "After a little time I will pray against him; I will beseech God to render to him according to his works: it is better that he should perish, than that he should continue to blaspheme Christ. I do not wish you to pray for this wretch; pray for us alone."* His adversaries are full of devils: if they die, the devil has strangled them; "one foams at the mouth; another has the horns and tail of Satan. This one is clad as Antichrist; that man changed into block. Oftentimes the same personage, in the same page, is travestied as a mule, a camel, an owl, and a mole."†

What are we to think of the spirit of the following language, addressed to an assembly of his disciples. "My brethren, be submissive, and communicate only under one kind. If you do what I say to you, I will be to you a good master; I will be to you a father, brother, friend. I will obtain graces and privileges from his majesty for you. If you disobey me, I declare that I will become your enemy, and do all the mischief possible to this city."‡ Volumes might be filled with extracts from Luther's writings, replete with the coarsest vulgarity: the specimens we have given are among the mildest.§

It is usual to excuse this coarseness of Luther by the spirit of the age in which he lived. This is scarcely a valid apology for one who set himself up as a reformer of religion and of morals, and who claimed a divine commission to establish a new system of doctrine. Besides, we look in vain for any such examples of vulgarity among his chief opponents in the Catholic church: Emser, Eck,

* Epist. ad Nicholas Hausman, 26 April, 1520.

† Aud. p. 118. ‡ Table Talk, p. 376.

§ For more instances consult the following pages of Audin, 136, 169, 235, 237, 239, 240, 243, 273, 285, 287, 288, 299, &c. &c.

Cajetan, Erasmus, and the great Leo X, were far too refined to employ any such weapons. The reformers seemed to claim a special privilege in this way. Let us exhibit a few specimens of the manner in which some of these, who differed from Luther in their doctrinal views, spake of the Saxon reformer. They returned railing for railing.

"This man," says one of his cotemporary reformers, "is absolutely mad. He never ceases to combat truth against all justice, even against the cry of his own conscience."* "He is puffed up," says another, "with pride and arrogance, and is seduced by Satan."† "Yes," re-echoes another, "the devil is master of Luther to such a degree as to make one believe that he wishes to gain entire possession of him."‡

Luther had said of this last witness, Zuingle, "that he was possessed not by one, but by a whole troop of devils."§ The church of Zurich returned the compliment, and said of Luther that "he wrote all his works by the impulse and the dictation of the devil, with whom he had dealing, and who in the struggle seemed to have thrown him by victorious arguments."‖

This last charge was not without foundation. Luther himself relates his "conference with the devil" in full, and acknowledges, at the close of it, that he was unable to answer the arguments of Satan!¶ The devil, as was quite natural, argued against the lawfulness of private masses, which Luther feebly defended: and so convincing were the reasons of his satanical majesty, that Luther wrote to his intimate friend Melancthon immediately after: "I will not again celebrate private masses for ever."** And he faithfully kept his promise! It was

* Hospinian. † Œcolampadius. ‡ Zuingle.

§ "*Non ab uno dæmone obsessum, sed à totâ cohorte.*" *Lib. contra Sacramentarios.* ‖ *Contra Confessionem Lutheri*, p. 61.

¶ In his treatise *de Missâ privatâ.* See the conference in full in Audin, p. 181, *seqq.*

** "*Sed et ego amplius non faciam missam privatam in æternum.*" Ad Melancth. Aug. 1, 1521.

favorite saying of his that, "unless we have the devil hanging about our necks, we are but pitiful theologians!"*

Can we wonder then at this compliment paid him by his brother Protestants of the church of Zurich: "But how strangely does this fellow let himself be carried away by his devils! How disgusting is his language, and how full are his words of the devil of hell!"† If these sayings are hard, it is surely not our fault: Luther bore similar testimony of himself, and of his brother Protestants, who happened to differ from him; and these did but retort on him the same compliments! We are but the humble witnesses and historians of the conflict. The reformers are certainly unexceptionable witnesses of each other's characters. Is it likely that God selected such instruments to reform his church?

Luther's standard of morality was about as high as that of his good breeding. St. Paul tells us that a Christian's "conversation is in heaven:"‡ Luther's, on the contrary, was not only earthly, but often immoral and revolting in the extreme. He discussed, in all their most disgusting details, subjects which St. Paul would not have so much as "named among Christians."§ His famous "Table Talk" is full of such specimens of decency. Wine and women, the pope and the devil, are the principal subjects of which the reformer liked to treat, when alone with his intimate friends, in private and unreserved conversation. For fifteen years—from 1525 to 1540—he was a nightly visiter to the "Black Eagle" tavern of Wittemberg, where he met and conversed, over the ale-jug, with his bosom friends, Melancthon, Amsdorf, Aurifaber, Justus Jonas, Lange, Link, and Staupitz.

* *Nisi diabolum habemus collo affixum, nihil nisi speculativi theologi sumus.*" Colloquia Mensalia, fol. 23. See, for more on this subject, an article on "demonology and the reformation," published in the ninth number of the Catholic Cabinet, for January, 1844.

† Church of Zurich—*Contra Confess. Lutheri.*

‡ Philip. iii, 20. § Ephes. v, 3.

His disciples carefully collected and published these conversations of their "beloved master," as so many oracles. Erasmus Albert, one of them, tells us, in a work against Karlstadt, that "these table discourses of the doctor are better than any sermons;" and Frederick Mecum, another early Lutheran, calls them "affecting conversations, which ought to be diffused among the people."* The first editions of the work were published in German and in Latin by Mathesius, Peter Rebstock, and Aurifaber, all zealous disciples of the reformer.† If there was any indiscretion in thus revealing to the world the secret conversations of this "ale pope of the 'Black Eagle'" with his boon companions, *their* zeal is alone to blame for the exposure. The "Table Talk," or *Tisch Reden*, as it is called in German, revealing as it does the heart of Luther in his most unguarded moments, is perhaps the best key to his character.

We will not soil our pages with extracts from the "Table Talk," revealing the moral turpitude of Luther. Those who may doubt the truth of the picture we have drawn, or who may feel a curiosity in such matters, are referred to the work itself—a ponderous folio of 1350 pages, besides an index, which alone would make a volume of considerable size.‡ Luther's immorality was not, however, confined to private conversations at the Black Eagle: he unblushingly and sacrilegiously exhibited it in the very sanctuary of God's holy temple! His "sermon on matrimony," delivered in the German language, from the pulpit of the public church of All Saints at Wittemberg, enters into the most revolting details upon a most delicate

* Apud Audin, p. 386.

† The first edition was that of Eisleben, Luther's birth place, in 1566, twenty years after his death. It was speedily followed by others, at Frankfort on the Oder in 1567 and 1571; at Jena in 1591; at Leipsic in 1603 and 1700; at Dresden and again at Leipsic in 1723.

‡ M. Audin has exhibited copious extracts from the work, p. 387, *seqq.*

subject. The perusal of that sermon, even in the French language—under the veil of which the translator of M. Audin has wisely thought proper to leave it partially concealed—is enough to raise a blush on the cheek of modesty! He preached this sermon in 1521, immediately after his return from the Castle of the Wartburg, where he had held his famous "conference with the devil;" and it is worthy of such a master, if indeed the demon himself, who is said to have little *gusto* for such matters, would not have blushed at the obscenity of his wanton disciple!

We may as well remark here, *en passant*, that it was in this same church, about the same time, that Luther delivered the withering invective against Karlstadt and some other ultra reformers, who had torn down or defaced the statues and paintings of the church, during his absence at the Wartburg. The following extract from this oration contains a boast characteristic of Luther. "I have done more mischief to the pope, even while I slept, or was drinking beer with Philip and Amsdorf, than all the princes and emperors put together!"*

We shudder, while we record the following horrid blasphemies, taken from his "Table Talk;" and we should have refrained from publishing them, had he not set himself up as a reformer of God's church, and in that garb seduced many. "May the name of the pope be d——d: may his reign be abolished; may his will be restrained! If I thought that God did not hear my prayer, I would address the devil."† Again: "I owe more to my dear Catharine and to Philip, than to God himself."‡ Finally: "God has made many mistakes. I would have given him good advice, had I assisted at the creation. I would have made the sun shine incessantly; the day would have been without end."§ Could human wickedness or temerity have gone farther than this!

* Opp. Lutheri, Tom vii. Chytr. Chron. Sax. p. 247.
† Table Talk, p. 213, Edit. Eisleben.
‡ Ibid. p. 124. § Id. Ed. Frank. part ii, fol. 20.

It is not a little remarkable, that from the date of his "conference with the devil," Luther's moral career was constantly downward; until at last he reached the lowest grade of infamy, and became utterly steeped in vice. How strongly does his reckless conduct after this period, contrast with his vigils, long prayers, and fasts, while an humble monk in the Catholic church. He himself draws the contrast in his own forcible manner. He tells us that while a Catholic, "he passed his life in austerities, in watchings, in fasts and praying, in poverty, chastity and obedience."* When he had abandoned Catholicity, he says of himself, that he was no longer able to resist the vilest propensities,† and that, "as it did not depend upon him not to be a man, so neither did it depend upon him to be without a woman."‡ His immorality was generally known, and he himself often acknowledged it. "He was," says Sleidan, a Protestant historian of the time, "so well aware of his immorality, as we are informed by his favorite disciple (Melancthon,) that he wished they would remove him from the office of preaching."§ In his Table Talk, he often avowed the base passions which raged within him; but in language much too gross for our pages. He sometimes complained, that "the Wittembergers who supply all the monks with wives, will not give me one."‖

Though he had made a solemn vow of chastity; and though the Holy Scriptures command us to fulfil our vows;¶ yet he married Catharine Bora, a nun bound by similar sacred engagements! He hesitated long before he took this step, and had some misgivings even while taking it: his conscience did not become wholly seared, until

* Tom. v. Opp. Commentar. in c. i ad Galatas v, 14.

† "*Carnis meæ indomitæ uror magnis ignibus, carne, libidine.*" Apud Audin, p. 355.

‡ Opp. Tom. v, fol. 119. *Sermo de Matrimonio.*

§ Sleidan, B. ii, An. 1520. ‖ See Meyer—*Ehren Gedachtniss*, fol. 26.

¶ Psalm lxxv, 12.

some time afterwards! While at the Wartburg in 1521—a little before his satanical interview—he uttered the following exclamation of horror, on being shown some *theses* of his recreant disciple, Karlstadt, in which this man allowed wives to priests and monks—"Good heaven! will our Wittemberg friends allow wives even to monks! Ah! at least they will not make *me* take a wife."* And again he says: "the friars have of their own accord chosen a life of celibacy—they are therefore not at liberty to withdraw from the obligations they have laid themselves under."† Three years later, in 1524, he said: "God may change my purpose, if such be his pleasure; but at present I have no thought of taking a wife."‡

And yet, but a few short weeks elapsed, and he espoused Catharine Bora! That he had some misgivings on the occasion, would appear from these words of his letter to an intimate friend, Wenceslaus Link—"Away with your scruples: let the Lord be glorified. I have my little Catharine. I belong to Bora, and am dead to the world"§—and to conscience (!). To Koeppe, another boon companion, he wrote: "you know well what has happened to me. I am caught in the snares of a woman. God must have been angry with me and with the world."‖ Luther at first felt the degradation to which he had stooped, by violating his sacred vows. In a letter to his intimate friend Spalatin, immediately after his marriage, he says, "that he had made himself so vile and contemptible by these nuptials, that he hopes all the angels will laugh, and all the demons weep!"¶ And yet this feeling soon gave way to a conviction, which he expressed in a confi-

* *At mihi non obtrudent uxorem.* Lib. Epist. ii, p. 40. D'Aubigné iii, 26. † *Ibid.* p. 34; D'Aubigné, *ib* p. 26, 27.

‡ Epist. ii, p. 570, 30th Nov. 1524.

§ Epist. Tom. ii, p. 245. Wittemb. edit. Seckendorf, l. i, s. 63, clxxxii. ‖ Ibid. Tom. ii, p. 903. Edit. Altenb.

¶ Epistola Spalatino. "Sic me vilem et contemptum his nuptiis feci, ut angelos ridere, et demones flere sperem."

dential letter to another friend, "that God himself had inspired him with the thought of marrying that nun—Catharine de Bora!!"* Could infatuation go farther than this?

The whole world was astounded or shocked at this conduct of the Saxon reformer. The Catholics viewed it as open sacrilege: many Protestants were saddened and scandalized. Among these was Melancthon, who deplored this conduct of his master in a letter to Camerarius; but with singular inconsistency adds: "Wo, however, to him who would reject the doctrine, on account of the sins of the teacher." The accomplished, but wavering Erasmus, viewed it as but another proof of his caustic remark, "that the tragedy of the reformation ever terminated in the comedy of marriage." In a letter written on the occasion, he says: "this is a singular occurrence; Luther has thrown off the philosopher's cloak, and has just married a young woman of twenty-six—handsome, well-made, and of a good family, but who has no dowry, and who for some time had ceased to be a vestal. The nuptials were most auspicious; for a few days after the hymeneal songs were sung, the bride was delivered! Luther revels, while a hundred thousand peasants descend to the tomb!"† The circumstance here developed may perhaps explain Luther's haste in the matter. All Germany was aroused by the tidings of Luther's marriage. His opponents, as well as those who were indifferent, laughed at his expense through all the notes of the gamut! Sonnets, epigrams, satires, *epithalamia* and caricatures, poured in on his devoted head like a hail storm, from every quarter: among these, the best perhaps were those of Doctors Emser and Wimpina. The former extemporized an *epithalamium* in

* Epist. Wenceslao Link.

† *Epist. Danieli Manchis Ulmensi.* Oct. 6, 1525. This letter of Erasmus has given rise to an animated controversy between the friends and opponents of Luther. Those who may wish to see both sides, are referred to Audin, p. 362, seqq.

Latin verse, and set it to music: "Farewell! cowl, prior, guardian, abbot: adieu to all vows: adieu to matins and prayers, fear and shame: adieu to conscience!"* The latter is a wood-cut caricature, exhibiting, in withering and ludicrous contrast, the marriage of Luther and the divine injunction: "Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God"—*Vovete, et reddite Domino Deo tuo.*†

Luther seems to have retired for a time from the pitiless peltings of the storm—"dead to the world, with his little Catharine"—but he again emerged from solitude, more reckless and violent than ever. As Erasmus remarked, "marriage had not tamed him!" Indeed, it would seem that "his little Catharine," gave him no *little* trouble and annoyance. She sometimes played the part of the scold and the vixen. He used to call her—after the honey-moon of course—"my master Ketha"‡—poor man!

Before he left the Catholic church, he was temperate and abstemious: during the last twenty-one years of his life—from his marriage in 1525 to his death in 1546—he was much given to the luxuries of the table, and drank beer copiously, if not to excess. Maimbourg and others tell us, that he lost the use of reason at many of the sumptuous banquets, in which he was wont to revel with his intimate friends; and Seckendorf, his warmest admirer, admits that "he used food and drink joyfully, and indulged in jokes"§—even on the eve of his death. In fact, so

* Cuculla, vale, capa!
Vale prior, custos, abba!
Cum obedientia,
Cum jubilo.
Ite vota, preces, horæ,
Vale timor cum pudore:
Vale conscientia! &c.
Cochlæus in Act. Lutheri, fol. 118.

† Psalm lxxv, 12; Prot. vers. lxxvi, 12. The only answer Luther made to Wimpina, was this: "*Let the sow grunt.*"

‡ "*Dominus meus Ketha.*"

§ "*Cibo et potu hilariter usus est; et facetiis indulsit.*" Seckendorf, Commentar. de Lutheranismo.

little was he in the habit of restraining his passions, or of concealing his vices, that they all stood out in bold relief —strong even in death!

His death was in every respect worthy of his life since he had turned reformer. His last words contained a refusal to retract his errors, and a declaration that he wished to die as he had lived! We will give a few incidents connected with his last moments. "I am ready to die," he said, "whenever it shall please God my Saviour; but I would wish to live till Pentecost, that I might stigmatize before the whole world this Roman beast, whom they call the pope, and with him his kingdom." His pains becoming very acute, he said one day to his nurse: "I wish there was a Turk here to kill me." Hear how he prays, while suffering: "my sins—death, the devil—give me no rest! What other consolation have I but thy grace, O God! Ah! let it not abandon the most miserable of men, the greatest of sinners!" Witness again the spirit of the following characteristic *orison:* "O my God! how I would wish that Erasmus and the Sacramentarians, did for a moment experience the pains that I suffer: then I would become a prophet and foretell their conversion."*

After the sumptuous feast alluded to above, he gave vent to his humor in the following strain, the subject of which is the devil—his usual hobby: "my dear friends, we cannot die, till we have caught hold of Lucifer by the tail! I saw his back yesterday from the castle turrets."† The discourse subsequently turned on the study of the Scriptures, and Luther made the following declaration, which is valuable as a death-bed confession. "It is no trifle to understand the Scriptures. Five years' hard labor will be required to understand Virgil's Georgics: twenty years' experience to be master of Cicero's Epistles: and a hundred years' intercourse with the prophets Elias,

* For more facts of a similar kind, see Audin, p. 482, seqq.

† Rareburgius, in his MS. Seckendorf. lib. iii, s. 36, cxxxiv.

Eliseus, John the Baptist, Christ and the apostles, to know the Scriptures!—Alas! poor human nature!"* And yet the last twenty-nine years of his life had been devoted to the promulgation of the cardinal principle of his new religion—that every one was fully competent to understand the Scriptures by his own private judgment! Well may *we* exclaim—"Alas! poor human nature!"

Such was Martin Luther, *after* he had left the holy Catholic church! Compare his character then with what it was *before* that event; and then apply M. D'Aubigné's test given above, and the conclusion is irresistible—that he was not a chosen instrument in the hands of God for reforming the church, which "He had purchased with His blood."† Before he left the church, he was, as we have seen, humble, patient, pious, devoted, chaste, scrupulous—afterwards, he was, in every one of these particulars, directly the reverse! Does God choose such instruments to do his work? Was Moses, was Aaron, were the apostles such characters? He, like the apostles, forsooth! They were humble, chaste, patient, temperate and modest: he was proud, immoral, impatient and shameless. They had a mission from God, and proved it by miracles: he had not the one, nor did he claim the other; though challenged on the subject, by the Zuinglians and by the Anabaptists.‡ Therefore God did not send him—and all of M. D'Aubigné's canting theory falls to the ground. What must the "lock" of the reformation be, if Luther's character be the "key"—which suits its internal structure?

It would be easy to show, by unquestionable evidence, that the other reformers were not a whit better than Luther. We have seen already what testimony they bore to

* Florimond Remond, b. iii, c. ii, fol. 287. Laign, vita Lutheri, fol. 4.

† Acts xx, 28.

‡ See Audin, p. 239. Stübner, an Anabaptist, asked him to produce his miracles. He was silent, though a little before, he had made the very same challenge to Karlstadt, and renewed it afterwards to the Zuinglians!

the character of each other; and we shall have occasion to recur to the subject in the sequel of our essay. "The historian, Hume, has truly characterized the reformers as 'fanatics and bigots;' but with no less justice might he have added, that they were (with one exception *perhaps*)* the coarsest hypocrites:† men, who, while professing the most high-flown sanctity in their writings, were in their conduct, brutal, selfish and unrestrainable; who, though pretending, in matters of faith, to adopt reason as their guide, were in all things else, the slaves of the most vulgar superstition; and who, with the boasted right of judgment forever on their lips, passed their lives in a course of mutual recrimination and persecution; and transmitted the same warfare as an heir-loom to their descendants. Yet, 'these be thy Gods,' O Protestantism!—these the coarse idols which heresy has set up in the niches of the saints and fathers of old, and whose names, like those of all former such idols, are worn like brands upon the foreheads of their worshippers."‡ Whoever will read attentively the veridical history of the reformation, will admit the truth of this picture drawn by the great Irish bard.

* Melancthon.

† Bucer admits the justice of this reproach. Epist. ad Calvin.

‡ "Travels of an Irish Gentleman," &c. p. 200, 201. Doyle, New York, 1835.

Part II.

CHAPTER II.

CHARACTER OF THE REFORMATION—THEORY OF M. D'AUBIGNÉ EXAMINED.

The question stated—M. D'Aubigné's opinion—Mother and daughter—Argumentum ad hominem—Jumping at a conclusion—Second causes—Why Germany was converted—Why Italy and Spain were not—Luther and Mohammed—Reasoning by contraries—Why France continued Catholic.

We have seen what was the character of the chief instruments who brought about the reformation in Germany; we are now to examine what was the character of the work itself, and how it was effected. Were the reasons assigned as the great motives for this alleged reform in religion, sufficient to justify it, according to the judgment of impartial men? Were the means employed for bringing it about such as would lead us to believe, that it was really a change for the better; and were they such as God would or could have approved and sanctioned? Finally, weighing these motives and these means, and making all due allowance for the condition of the times, was there any thing very remarkable in the rapid progress of the reformation? We will endeavor to solve these inquiries in the following chapters.

M. D'Aubigné devoutly believes, that the reformation was not only sanctioned by God, but that it was directly his work. Let us hear how he discourses on the subject. "Christianity and the reformation are, indeed, the same revolution, but working at different periods, and in dis-

similar circumstances. They differ in secondary features —they are alike in their first lines, and leading characteristics. The one is the reappearance of the other. The former closes the old order of things—the latter begins the new. Between them is the middle age. One is the parent of the other; and if the daughter is in some respects inferior, she has in others, characters altogether peculiar to herself."* In opposition to this flattering theory, we will endeavor to prove that the reformation differs from Christianity, not only "in secondary features," but also "in its first lines and leading characteristics;" and that, if the former was the daughter of the latter, she was a most recreant and degenerate daughter truly, with scarcely one lineament in common with her parent. Verily, she had "characters altogether peculiar to herself," and she was not only "in some respects," but in almost every thing, not only "inferior" to, but the direct opposite, of her alleged parent!

According to M. D'Aubigné, one of these "characters of the reformation peculiar to itself," was "the suddenness of its action." He illustrates the rapidity with which the reformation was established, by the figure employed by our blessed Saviour to denote the suddenness of his second coming: "As the lightning cometh forth from the west and shineth to the east, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "Christianity," he says, "was one of those revolutions, which was slowly and gradually prepared;" the reformation, on the contrary, was instantaneous in its effect: "a monk speaks—and in half of Europe the power and glory"—of the church of Rome—"crumbles in the dust!"† This rapidity he views as a certain evidence, that the reformation was the work of God. For "how could an entire people—how could so many nations, have so rapidly performed so difficult a work? How could such an act of critical judgment," on the neces-

* Preface, p. iv. † Ibid.

sity and measure of the reform, "kindle the enthusiasm indispensable to great, and especially to sudden revolutions? But the reformation was a work of a very different kind; and this, its history will prove. It was the pouring forth anew of that life which Christianity had brought into the world."*

We trust to make it appear in the sequel, that the rapidity with which the reformation was diffused, was the result of "the pouring forth" of a different spirit altogether. Meantime, we would beg leave to ask M.D'Aubigné to answer this *argumentum ad hominem*. If the suddenness of the reformation be a proof that it was brought about by the "pouring forth anew of that life which Christianity had brought into the world;" would not the contrary feature of Christianity—its gradual operation†—be a conclusive evidence, that this system was not the work of God? And if this argument be not valid, what truth is there in M. D'Aubigné's whole theory? Would not his reasoning, if reduced to the strict laws of logic, rather prove that the reformation, differing avowedly as it does in an essential feature from Christianity, was not effected by the agency of the Divine Spirit, but was the mere result of violent human passions, which usually bring about sudden revolutions, both in the religious and in the social system?

It is curious to trace the farther development of his theory. "Two considerations will account for the rapidity and extent of this revolution. One of these must be sought in God, the other among men. The impulse was given by an unseen hand of power, and the change which took place was the work of God. This will be the conclusion arrived at by every one who considers the subject with impartiality and attention, and does not rest in a superficial view. But the historian has a farther office to perform—

* Preface, p. iv.

† This we merely suppose with M. D'Aubigné, who gives no proof of its truth.

God acts by second causes. Many circumstances, which have often escaped observation, gradually prepared men for the great transformation of the sixteenth century, so that the human mind was ripe when the hour of its emancipation arrived."* Now, we have given no little attention to the subject, and we claim at least as much impartiality as our historian of "the great reformation;" and yet, for the life of us, we can arrive at no such conclusion: we have reached one precisely contrary. And the reasons which have forced us to make this inference are so many and so cogent, that we are even under the conviction, that all will agree with us, who "consider the subject with impartiality and attention, and do not rest in a superficial view."

In examining the secondary causes, by which God "gradually prepared men for the great transformation of the sixteenth century," our historian assigns a prominent place to Germany. "As Judea, the birth-place of our religion, lay in the centre of the ancient world, so Germany was situate in the midst of Christian nations. She looked upon the Netherlands, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Denmark, and the whole of the north. It was fit that the principle of life should develop itself in the *heart* of Europe, that its pulses might circulate through all the arteries of the body the generous blood designed to vivify its members."†

He alleges the following most singular reasons why Germany was "ripe" for the reformation: "the Germans had received from Rome that element of modern civilization, the faith. Instruction, legislation—all, save their courage and their weapons, had come to them from the sacerdotal city. Strong ties had from that time attached Germany to the papacy."‡ Therefore was she "ripe" for a rupture with Rome! This connexion with Rome "made the reaction more powerful at the moment of awakening."§

* Preface, p. v. † Book i, p. 76. ‡ Ib. pp. 78, 79. § Ib. p. 79.

Again: "the gospel had never been offered to Germany n its primitive purity; the first missionaries who visited he country gave to it a religion already vitiated in more han one particular. It was a law of the church, a spir- tual discipline, that Boniface and his successors carried o the Trisons, the Saxons and other German nations. Faith in the 'good tidings,' that faith which rejoices the eart and makes it free indeed, had remained unknown o them."* Therefore, when Luther and his brother re- ormers announced these "good tidings" in all their pu- ity for the first time—fraught too with endless variations nd contradictions—the Germans were prepared for the 'awakening," and received the Gospel with enthusiasm!! Truly, M. D'Aubigné loves to reason by contraries, and o startle his readers by palpable absurdities!

No less curious is his reason for explaining why the talians did not receive the "Gospel." "And if the truth vas destined to come from the north," he says, "how could he Italians, so enlightened, of so refined a taste and so- ial habits, so delicate in their own eyes, condescend to eceive any thing at the hands of the barbarous Germans? Their pride, in fact, raised between the reformation and hemselves a barrier higher than the Alps. But the ery nature of their mental culture was a still greater ob- tacle than the presumption of their hearts. Could men, vho admired the elegance of a well cadenced sonnet more han the majestic simplicity of the Scriptures, be a propi- ious soil for the seed of God's word? A false civilization , of all conditions of a nation, that which is most repug- ant to the Gospel."† Those who have read Roscoe's Life and pontificate of Leo X," will greatly question ne accuracy of this picture of Italian civilization.

We shall prove in the sequel that before, and during ne time of the reformation, Italy did much more than Germany, to evidence her admiration "for the majestic

* Ibid. p. 78. † Ibid. p. 84.

simplicity of the Scriptures." At present we will barely remark, that the gist of M. D'Aubigné's theory consists in the assertion, that Italy was too "enlightened," too "refined in taste and social habits," too "delicate in her own eyes," and too "proud and presumptuous" to receive the "Gospel;" while Germany, being on the contrary less enlightened, less refined, and more corrupt in doctrine and morals, was a more genial soil—just the one, in fact, which was most "ripe" for its reception, and most likely to foster its growth!! We award him cheerfully the whole benefit of this, his speculation on the "preparation of the Gospel."

To confirm his theory still farther, he thus accounts for the singular fact that Spain did not embrace Protestantism. "Spain possessed, what Italy did not—a serious and noble people, whose religious mind has resisted even the stern trial of the eighteenth century, and of the revolution (French), and maintained itself to our own days. In every age this people has had among its clergy men of piety and learning, and it was sufficiently remote from Rome to throw off without difficulty her yoke. There are few nations wherein one might more reasonably have hoped for a revival of that primitive Christianity, which Spain had probably received from St. Paul himself. And yet Spain did not then stand up among the nations. She was destined to be an example of that word of the divine wisdom, 'the first shall be last.'"* What a pity! We have little doubt ourselves, that these were precisely among the principal reasons, why Spain did not stand up among "the nations," who revolted against Catholicity in the sixteenth century: and her having passed unscathed through this fiery ordeal, may also serve to explain to us how she was enabled "to resist even the stern trial of the eighteenth century, and of the revolution." Her people were too "serious and too noble"—their mind was too

* Ibid. p. 85.

"religious"—and their clergy had too much "piety and learning"—to allow them to be carried away by the novel vagaries of Protestantism.

Among the "various circumstances which conduced to the deplorable result"—of her remaining Catholic, M. D'Aubigné mentions her "remoteness from Germany," the "*heart*" of Europe—"an eager desire after riches" in the new world—the influence of her "powerful clergy"—and her military glory, which had just risen to its zenith, at the conquest of Grenada and the expulsion of the Moors. In reference to this last cause, he asks emphatically: "how could a people who had expelled Mahomet from their noble country, allow Luther to make way in it?"* This question is at least characteristic! Was there then, in the ideas of the "serious and noble" Spaniards, so little difference between Luther and Mohammed!

"Few countries," he says, "seemed likely to be better disposed than France for the reception of the evangelical doctrines. Almost all the intellectual and spiritual life of the middle ages was concentrated in her. It might have been said, that the paths were every where trodden for a grand manifestation of the truth."† Perhaps this preservation of the "intellectual and spiritual life of the middle ages," was a principal reason why France continued Catholic. A little farther on,‡ he says: "the (French) people, of quick feeling, intelligent, and susceptible of generous emotions, were as open, or even more so than other nations, to the truth. It seemed as if the reformation must be, among them, the birth which should crown the travail of several centuries. But the chariot of France, which seemed for so many generations to be advancing to the same goal, suddenly turned at the moment of the reformation, and took a contrary direction. Such was the will of Him, who rules nations and their kings." We admire his pious resignation to the will of God! This sen-

* Ibid. p. 86. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 87.

timent will console him for his disappointment: "that the augury of ages was deceived,"* in regard to France. He adds, in the same pious strain: "perhaps, if she had received the Gospel, she might have become too powerful!"

He winds up his jeremiad with these and similar passages: "France, after having been almost reformed, found herself, in the result, Roman Catholic. The sword of her princes, cast into the scale, caused it to incline in favor of Rome. Alas! another sword, that of the reformers themselves, ensured the failure of the effort for reformation. The hands that had been accustomed to warlike weapons, ceased to be lifted up in prayer. It is by the blood of its confessors, not by that of its adversaries, that the Gospel triumphs. Blood shed by its defenders, extinguishes and smothers it."† That is, the reformation sought to establish itself in France by violence and by force, and signally failed! Elsewhere, as we shall see, it was more successful in the employment of such carnal weapons. But Protestantism obtained sufficient foot-hold in France to do incredible mischief for a century and a half; and it sowed upon her beautiful soil the fatal seeds which, two centuries and a half later, produced the bitter fruits of anarchy, infidelity and bloodshed, during the dreadful "reign of terror!"

Such is the theory of M. D'Aubigné: and we now proceed to its refutation, which is no difficult task, as in fact it sufficiently refutes itself.

* Ibid. † Ibid.

CHAPTER III.

PRETEXTS FOR THE REFORMATION.

Usual plea—Abuses greatly exaggerated—Three questions put and answered—Origin of abuses—Free-will unimpaired—Councils to extirpate abuses—Church thwarted by princes and the world—Controversy on investitures—Extent of the evil—Sale of indulgences—St. Peter's Church—John Tetzel—His errors greatly exaggerated—Public penance—License to sin—Nature of indulgences—Tetzel rebuked and his conduct disavowed by Rome—Miltitz and Cardinal Cajetan—Kindness thrown away—Luther in tears—Efforts of Rome—Leo X and Adrian VI—Their forbearance censured by Catholic writers—Their tardy severity justified by D'Aubigné—Luther's real purpose—The proper remedy—The real issue—Nullification—Curing and cutting a throat—Luther's avowal—Admissions of the confession of Augsburg and of Daillé—Summing up.

The most usual plea for the reformation is, that it was necessary for the correction of the abuses which had crept into the Catholic church. These are exaggerated and painted in the most glowing colors, by M. D'Aubigné, and by other writers favorable to the reformation. He dwells with evident complacency on the vices of one or two popes, and of many of the Catholic bishops and clergy, secular and regular, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He represents the whole church as thoroughly corrupt, and states that, but for the reformation, religion would have perished entirely from the face of the earth! We have already seen how he compared the reformers, preaching up their new-fangled doctrines among the benighted Roman Catholics of the sixteenth century, to the apostles preaching the Gospel to the Pagans of their day! And how coolly he assured us that the "reformation was but the re-appearance of Christianity!" We record our solemn protest against the gross injustice of this whole view of the subject.

But we are asked—"What? do you deny the existence of abuses in the Catholic church? Do you deny, that those abuses were great and wide spread? Do you deny, that it was proper, and even necessary to correct them?" We deny none of these things; except that there is an implied exaggeration in the second question. We admit the existence of the evil complained of, especially about the beginning of the sixteenth century; and we deplore it, as sincerely at least, as do the opponents of the Catholic church. A good cause can never suffer from the truth, and the whole truth. Let genuine history pronounce its verdict as to the real facts of the case; and we bow to the decision. But what was the origin of the abuses complained of? what was their extent? and what was the adequate and proper remedy for them? We will endeavor briefly to answer these three questions.

I. It was not the intention of Christ, nor was it the design of the Christian religion wholly to prevent the possibility of abuses. He willed, indeed, that all men should embrace his religion, and reduce its holy principles to practice; in which case, there would have been no disorders nor abuses on the face of the earth: and the world would have been an earthly paradise, free from all stain of sin. But this state of perfection could not have been effectually brought about, without offering violence to man's free will, which God, in his moral government of the world, has ever wished to leave unimpaired. Religion was offered to mankind with all its saving truths, its holy maxims, its purifying institutions, and its powerful sanctions of rewards and punishments in an after life. Sufficient grace was also offered to all, to enable them to learn and believe its doctrines, and to reduce to practice its commandments. But no one was *compelled* to do either. Among the twelve, who were trained under the immediate eye of Christ, there was one "devil."

Christ himself foresaw and foretold that scandals would come; and contented himself with pronouncing a "wo on

that man by whom the scandal cometh."* In his kingdom, there was to be cockle, as well as the good wheat, and he willed "that both should grow until the harvest"† of the general judgment, in which only, the final separation of the good and evil will take place. Nothing is more foreign to the nature of Christ's church, than the proposition, that it was intended only to comprise the elect and the just. The struggle between good and evil—between truth and error—between the powers of heaven and the "gates of hell"—is to go on until the consummation of the world: and Christ has pledged his solemn word, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church;"‡ and that he will be with the body of his pastors and teachers "all days even to the consummation of the world."§

Abuses existed in all ages of the church, even during her palmiest days. The writings of the earliest fathers—of St. Cyprian, of Tertullian, of St. Ambrose, and St. John Chrysostom—paint them in the most glowing colors. The church never approved of them—she could not do so even for a day; for Christ had solemnly promised to guard her from error. She bore her constant testimony against them, and labored without intermission for their removal. Her eighteen general councils—one for each century—and her local ecclesiastical assemblies, almost without number—diocesan, provincial, and national—what are they but evidences of this her constant solicitude, and records of her noble and repeated struggles for the extirpation of error and vice? There is not an error that she has not proscribed; not a vice or an abuse upon which she has not set the seal of her condemnation. She was divinely commissioned for this purpose: and well and fully has she discharged the commission!

Whenever she was not opposed nor thwarted in her purpose, error and vice disappeared before her, like the

* Math. xviii, 7. † Ibid. xiii, 30.
‡ Math. xvi, 18. § Ibid. xxviii, 20.

mists before the rising sun. But she had at all times to contend with numerous obstacles. This was particularly the case during the middle ages. The princes of the earth, especially in Germany, sought, during that whole period, to enslave the church, and to make the bishops the mere subservient instruments of their worldly purposes and earthly ambition. This they endeavored to effect by making them their vassals, and by claiming a right to confer on them even the INSIGNIA of their spiritual office. The effect of this last claim was to render the appointment of bishops, as well as the exercise of their spiritual jurisdiction, dependent on the whims of the secular power. The Roman pontiffs maintained an arduous contest, for centuries, with the emperors of Germany and with other princes, against this usurpation. The question of investitures was one of vital consequence—of liberty or slavery for the church. After a protracted struggle the pontiffs succeeded; but their success was neither so complete nor so permanent as the friends of the church could have wished. Emperors, kings, and princes, especially those of the Germanic body, had still far too much power in the nomination of bishops.

II. The consequences were most disastrous for the church. Unworthy bishops were often intruded into the principal sees. The example and the influence of these were frequently baneful to the character of the inferior clergy. Owing to the operation of these causes, the bishops and clergy of Germany, many of them, had greatly degenerated, about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Still there were many brilliant exceptions. The evil was by no means so general or so wide-spread as it is usually represented. We are yet free to avow that it is difficult to explain how such large bodies of the clergy abandoned the church in many countries of the north, in any other supposition than that they had sadly degenerated from primitive fervor. At the bidding of their prince, or at the prompting of their own self-interest,

they left that church which they had promised to defend, and at whose altars they had been consecrated!

The abuse and alleged sale of indulgences afforded the principal pretext for the first movements of the reformation. The church had always maintained her power to grant indulgences: she never sanctioned, in her official capacity, the abuses which, at some times and in some places, grew out of the exercise of this power. In the early church the canons imposed long and painful public penances on certain grievous transgressions. A canon of the general council of Nice, in 325, had given to the bishops a discretionary power to remit the whole or a part of those penances, when the penitent manifested special fervor. Other councils made similar enactments. During the middle ages the rigor of the ancient penitential system was greatly softened down: and the penances themselves were often commuted into alms or other pious works.

About the beginning of the sixteenth century Leo X conceived the purpose of erecting in Rome a temple, which should far surpass, in dimensions and magnificence, any thing that the world had ever yet seen. The origination of the plan of St. Peter's church was an idea worthy the mind of that magnificent pontiff; and its erection, which he commenced, is the noblest monument to his fame. To promote an object so splendid, he promulgated a bull, in which he promised ample indulgences to all who would contribute to so laudable an undertaking. And, if there were no other proof of the utility of indulgences, the erection of that splendid temple, mainly due to them, is a monument which would alone suffice to remove every cavil on the subject. No one can enter that church without being forcibly impressed with the majesty of God and the grandeur of the Christian religion. His soul becomes "as colossal as the building itself!"

Albert, archbishop of Mayence and Magdeburg, was appointed by the pontiff to carry out the intentions of the

bull in Germany. He nominated John Tetzel, a Dominican friar, to be the chief preacher of the indulgences. We have no mission to defend the extravagances imputed to this man. To us it appears that much injustice has been done him, and that his errors have been greatly exaggerated by his enemies. He seems to have been in the main a good man, with little prudence or discretion. The magnificent terms in which he set forth the utility and efficacy of the indulgences should have been explained, in common justice, according to the well known doctrine and practice of the church on this subject.

One thing is certain, that the abuses of which he is accused were not authorized by the church or the pontiff. M. D'Aubigné, an unexceptionable witness, tells us as much. He admits that, "in the pope's bull, something was said of the repentance of the heart and the confession of the lips;" but adds that "Tetzel and his companions cautiously abstained from all mention of these; otherwise their coffers might have remained empty;"* and that this omission was in consequence of instructions from Archbishop Albert, "who forbade them even to mention conversion or contrition."† And yet, on the same page, he acknowledges that confession, which necessarily presupposes conversion and contrition of heart, was a prerequisite to the granting of the indulgence! "Confession being gone through (and it was soon despatched), the faithful hastened to the vender."‡

We have strong reason to object to this term "vender:" the granting of the indulgence, even according to the avowedly unauthorized practice of Tetzel, did not justify the idea of a sale or traffic, properly so called. The offering made on the occasion was entirely free: those who were unable to contribute any thing, still obtained the boon; and those who were able, contributed according to their ability or will, no fixed amount being determined.

* Vol. i, p. 214. † Ibid. p. 215. ‡ Ibid.

All that even D'Aubigné asserts on this subject is, that "an angry look was cast on those who dared to close their purses."* When Protestant preachers take up collections at the close of their sermons, for the support of themselves, *their wives and children*, can it be said with propriety, that they sell their sermons for the amounts thus contributed, even should it happen that those sums more than equalled the value received? But the questors of indulgences did not go thus far, even according to the showing of our very partial historian. He tells us, "that the hand that delivered the indulgence could not receive the money: that was forbidden under the severest penalties."†

He even admits, that, notwithstanding the boasted efficacy of the indulgences, public penance was still enjoined by Tetzel and his associates, for offences which had given public scandal. "If, among those who pressed into the confessionals, there came one whose crimes had been public, and yet untouched by the civil laws, such person was obliged, first of all, to do public penance."‡ Did this look like patronizing vice? Was it not rather a salutary restraint on guilt, imposed as a condition for obtaining the indulgence? The very nature of the indulgence itself, and the conditions *always* required to obtain it, and set forth in the Bull of Leo X, far from favoring sin, or being an incentive to its commission, necessarily precluded both. An indulgence is merely a sequel to the sacrament of penance: it removes only the temporal penalty, which may remain due *after* the sin itself and the eternal punishment due to it, have been already remitted: and, according to its very nature, it cannot take effect, until all grievous sin has been already pardoned through sincere repentance and the sacrament of penance. It offers then, essentially, a most powerful inducement to repentance and amendment of life.

* Vol. i, p. 216. † Ibid.

‡ Ibid. True, he calls this a "wretched mummery," because Protestants cannot, or will not, understand or appreciate these works of penance! These are not to their taste!

The acts of Tetzel were officially disavowed by the court of Rome. In 1519, Charles Miltitz, the papal envoy, openly rebuked him for his conduct in the affair of the indulgences; and even charged him with having been the occasion of most of the troubles which during the previous two years had afflicted Germany.* He, however, condemned the friar unheard, relying chiefly upon the exaggerated representations of his enemies. He would not even allow the Dominican to defend himself against the grievous charges brought against him by Luther.† Among these was the accusation, that he had uttered horrid blasphemies against the Blessed Virgin Mary. In a letter to Miltitz, Tetzel indignantly repelled this charge: but the spirit of the monk was broken; and he died soon after, most probably of chagrin. Most writers of impartiality blame the conduct of the papal envoy, who immoderately flattered Luther on the one hand, and sacrificed Tetzel on the other.‡ His motive, however, was a good one: to conciliate Luther by removing all reasonable causes of complaint, and thus to heal the schism with which he menaced the church of God.

But Miltitz did not know his man. All conciliation was entirely thrown away on him. The learned and amiable Cardinal Cajetan, a year before, had made the attempt to win him by kindness, in the interview they had at Augsburg. Luther was affected even unto tears by this goodness; and, at the close of the conference, addressed the cardinal nuncio in the following strain: "I return to you, my father! . . . I am moved. I have no more fear: my fear is changed into love and filial respect; you might have employed force, but you have chosen persuasion and charity. Yes, I avow it now—I have been violent and hostile, and have spoken irreverently of the pope. I was provoked to these excesses; but I should have been more

* D'Aubigné, vol. ii, p. 16.

† See Audin, "Life of Luther," p. 89, 90. ‡ Ibid.

guarded on so serious a question, and, in answering a fool, I should have avoided imitating his folly. I am affected and penitent, and ask for pardon. I will acknowledge my repentance to whoever wishes to hear it declared. For the future, I promise you, father, to speak and act otherwise than I have done: God will assist me; I will speak no more of indulgences, provided you impose silence on all those who have involved me in these difficulties."* He concludes this letter with the following sentence: "I beseech you then, with all humility, to report this whole affair to our holy father, Pope Leo X, that the church may decide on what is to be believed, and what is to be rejected."† And yet, but a few weeks later, he published an inflammatory tract, in which he complained bitterly of the severity of Cajetan, spoke harshly of the pope, and appealed to a general council.‡ We have already seen how, while he promised every thing to Miltitz, he laughed, in letters to his private friends, at the "crocodile tears" and "Judas-like kiss" of that weak and duped nuncio!

The reformation of abuses in the matter of indulgences was but a pretext: the real motives of Luther and his partisans were very different, as the result proved. The pope, through his legates, had done every thing that could have been reasonably asked for the removal of the evils complained of. If the court of Rome was guilty of any fault, it was that of excessive leniency to Luther, and of too great a spirit of conciliation towards his partisans.§ This was especially true of the good Adrian VI, who suc-

* Apud, Audin, ibid. p. 81. † Ibid.

‡ Lutheri Opera, Tom. i, fol. 217. Audin, p. 85, seqq.

§ Pallavicini censures Leo X for his excessive forbearance with Luther, and for having commissioned Doctor Eck to publish the bull against him in Germany. (*Storia del Conc. di Trento cap. xxv.*) Muratori joins in the censures: "*Papa Leone che ruminando alti pensieri di gloria mondana, e piu che agli affari della religione agonizante in Germania pensando al' ingrandimento della chiesa temporale.*" (Annali, vol. x, p. 145.) Audin ably defends the pontiff, p. 115.

ceeded Leo X in the pontificate early in the year 1522. He immediately set about the work of reform with great zeal, both at Rome and in Germany. He took from the questors the power of distributing indulgences. In the diet of Nuremberg, in 1522, he offered, through his legate, Cheregat, to reform every abuse.* How were his advances met? They were repaid by triumphant insult and indignity. The diet, under Lutheran influence, drew up an inflammatory paper containing the famous *centum gravamina*—or "hundred grievances"—fraught with unfounded and highly exaggerated charges against Rome. And yet the good pontiff did not return railing for railing. He still promised to do every thing in his power to remove all causes of reasonable complaint. This pontiff, "who thought not of evil, and of whom the world was not worthy," according to the testimony of a Protestant historian,† died of a broken heart after the return of Cheregat. All the poor of Rome followed his hearse, and bewailed him: they said, "our father is dead!" While they passed, the people knelt down and burst into tears. Never had funeral pomp called forth so deep a feeling.‡

What, in fact, could Rome have done, which she did not do to redress every grievance, and to carry out every necessary measure of reform? Did the reformers ask for forbearance? Rome was perhaps too forbearing. Did they wish for a spirit of conciliation? Rome descended from her lofty dignity, and met them half way—and then they rudely repulsed her advances! Even M. D'Aubigné praises the forbearance of Leo X, and the "equity of the Romish synod," which prepared the bull against Luther.§ He says: "in fact, Rome was brought into the necessity of having recourse to measures of stern severity. The gauntlet was thrown down, the combat must be to the death. It was not the abuses of the pontiff's authority,

* "Neuere Geschichte der Deutchen, von Karl Ad. Menzel," a Protestant. T. 1. Apud Audin, p. 280.

† Adolph Menzel, *supra*. Tom. i, p. iii. Apud Audin, p. 282.

‡ Audin, *ibid.*

§ Vol. ii, p. 101.

that Luther had attacked. At his bidding, the pope was required to descend meekly from his throne, and become again a simple pastor or bishop on the banks of the Tiber!*

Had Luther sought only the truth, why did he so often consent to preserve silence, if the same obligation were imposed on his adversaries? Was this conduct worthy the apostle of reform, and the boasted champion of the Gospel in its purity? If he sought only truth, why did he not abide by the decisions of those numerous tribunals, to whose authority he himself had voluntarily appealed, as the arbiters of the matters in dispute? Why abuse them so intemperately, for having decided against him? The love of truth and the reform of abuses, were but shallow pretexts; the successive appeals just alluded to, were but crafty expedients to gain time: the real object was separation from the church, and the forming of a schismatical party of which he would be the head.

III. One of the tribunals to which Luther had appealed—the general council of Trent—adopted every measure that discreet zeal could have asked, for the reformation of abuses. By far the larger portion of its decrees are devoted to the work of reformation. On the subject of indulgences, the council employs this emphatic language: "wishing to correct and amend the abuses which have crept into them, and on occcasion of which, this signal name of indulgences is blasphemed by heretics, the holy synod enjoins in general by the present decree, that all wicked traffic for obtaining them, which has been the fruitful cause of many abuses among the Christian people, should be wholly abolished."† The same decree recom-

* Ibid. p. 97.

† Sessio xxv. Decret. de Indulg. "Abusus vero, qui in his irrepserunt, et quorum occasione insigne hoc Indulgentiarum nomen ab hæreticis blasphematur, emendatos et correctos cupiens, præsenti decreto generaliter statuit, pravos quæstus omnes pro his consequendis, unde plurima in Christiano populo abusuum causa fluxit, omnino abolendos esse."

mends great moderation in the granting of indulgences, and directs the bishops throughout the world, to detect and refer all local abuses in the matter to provincial councils to be held every three years, whence they are to be reported to the Roman pontiff. Could any wiser or greater measure of reform have been reasonably demanded?

Mr. Hallam, a witness whose authority will not be suspected, bears testimony to the merit of the Tridentine fathers. After having refuted at some length "a strange notion that has been started of late years in England, that the Council of Trent made important innovations in the previously established doctrines of the western church: an hypothesis," he says, "so paradoxical in respect to public opinion, and, it must be added, so prodigiously at variance with the known facts of ecclesiastical history, that we cannot but admire the facility with which it has been taken up;" he thus continues: "no council ever contained so many persons of eminent learning and ability as that of Trent; nor is there ground for believing that any other ever investigated the questions before it with so much patience, acuteness, temper, and desire of truth. The early councils, unless they are greatly belied (*very probably the case*), would not bear comparison in these characteristics. Impartiality and freedom from prejudice no Protestant will attribute to the fathers of Trent; but where will he produce these qualities in an ecclesiastical synod? But it may be said, that they had but one leading prejudice (!), that of determining theological faith according to the tradition of the Catholic church, as handed down to their own age. This one point of authority conceded, I am not aware that they can be proved to have decided wrong, or, at least, against all reasonable evidence. Let those who have imbibed a different opinion ask themselves, whether they have read Sarpi through with any attention, especially as to those sessions of the Tridentine council which preceded its suspension in

1547."* The history of the council of Trent by cardinal Pallavicini, which Hallam acknowledges he never read, would greatly confirm this conclusion.

All previous councils, both general and local, had adopted measures for reform, marked with similar wisdom and zeal. Many of the decrees of the general council of Constance, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, as well as those of the general council of Basle,† towards the middle of the same century, had been distinguished by the same solicitude. M. D'Aubigné admits this. "Had not gentler means been tried for ages? Had they not seen council after council convoked with the intention of reforming the church!"‡ True, he says, without however even the shadow of proof, that "all had been in vain."§ He also asserts against all evidence, that Martin V, who was chosen pontiff in the council of Constance, A. D. 1418, with the express stipulation, that he should carry out the measures of reform commenced by the council, subsequently refused to redeem his pledge.‖ But did not this pontiff convoke councils for the purpose successively at Pavia, Sienna, and Basle? And was it his fault that his intentions were not fully carried out?

The controversy did not turn on the necessity of reform, but on the means best calculated to bring it about. There were two ways of reforming abuses in the church; the one from *within*, the other from *without*—the one by gentle and legal means, the other by lawless violence. The Catholics were in favor of the former, the Protestants of the latter mode. The former wished to remain in the church, which Christ had commanded them to hear, and to labor therein for the extirpation of abuses; the latter separated from the church, and covered it with obloquy, against the solemn injunction of its divine founder. Were not the

* "History of Literature," *supra citat.* vol. i, p. 277, *note.*

† Before it degenerated into a schismatical conventicle, during the last sessions.

‡ Vol. i, p. 104. § Ibid. ‖ Ibid. p. 56.

Catholics right? Had they not the sanction of ages, which, following the precedent set them by the inspired Apostles themselves in the council at Jerusalem, had ever sought to proscribe error and to correct abuses, by legal enactments in general or particular councils? And did not the Protestants, on the contrary, follow the precedent set them by the separatists and heretics of every age of the church? What difference is there, in the principle, between the Lutherans protesting against the decisions of the council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, and the Arians, against those of the council of Nice, in the fourth.

Besides, was not reason clearly on the side of the Catholics? Which is the proper way to cure a sick patient; to remain with him, and to administer to him medicine, or to separate from him, and to denounce him for his malady? Which is the preferable way to repair an edifice; to remain within or near it, and to labor patiently to re-establish it in its former strength and beauty, or to leave it and bedaub its walls with mud and slime? Finally, which would be the better patriot: he who would remain faithful to the republic, and patiently await the progress of legal enactments for the redress of grievances, or he who would *nullify* the union under pretext of those grievances? Let the seal of public reprobation set upon a recent attempt of the kind—in which the principle of disorganization was precisely the same as that which urged the reformers to *nullify* the unity of the church—answer this question. An old Protestant divine of the church of England, illustrates the evil of separation from the church, under pretext of reforming it, by the following quaint comparison: "You may cure a throat when it is *sore*, but not when it is *cut*."* This is, we suppose, in the style *coupé*.

Luther himself avowed the correctness of these principles, about two years after he had commenced his pretended reformation. "That the Roman church," he says,

* South. "Sermons," vol. v, p. 946. Edit. London, 1737.

"is more honored by God than all others, is not to be doubted. St. Peter, St. Paul, forty-six popes, some hundreds of thousands of martyrs, have laid down their lives in its communion, having overcome hell and the world; so that the eyes of God rest on the Roman church with special favor. Though now-a-days every thing is in a wretched state, it is no ground for separating from it. On the contrary, the worse things are going, the more should we hold close to it; *for it is not by separation from it that we can make it better.* We must not separate from God on account of any work of the devil, nor cease to have fellowship with the children of God, who are still abiding in the pale of Rome, on account of the multitude of the ungodly. There is no sin, no amount of evil, which should be permitted to dissolve the bond of charity, or break the unity of the body. For love can do all things, and nothing is difficult to those who are united."* Sentiments worthy of a Gregory VII, or of a Bernard! Had he persevered in them—had he not immediately after substituted a principle of hatred, for that principle of love "which can do all things"—the world might never have been cursed with the countless evils of schism!

The sentiments of Luther just given were re-echoed by the confession of Augsburg, the official expositor of Lutheran doctrines. In the conclusion of its exposition of faith, it is freely admitted, that the Roman Catholic church had retained every article of doctrine essential to salvation, and that the abuses which had crept into the old church were unauthorized, and afforded no sufficient cause for separation. "Such is the abridgment of our faith, in which nothing will be found contrary to Scripture, or to the Catholic church, or even to the Roman church, as far as we can know it from its writers. The dispute turns upon some few abuses, which have been introduced into the churches *without any certain authority;* and should

* Lutheri Opera Lat. tom. xvii, p. 224. Apud D'Aubigné, ii, 18, 19.

there be found some difference, that should be borne with, since it is not necessary that the rites of the church should be every where the same."* Even the Calvinist minister of Charenton, M. Daillé, much as he hated the Catholic church, makes a similar avowal. After having enumerated those articles of his belief, which he is pleased to call *fundamental*, he says: "Rome does not call in question the articles which we believe; it even professes to believe them. Who can deny, even in our day, that Rome admits the necessary articles?"† Why then separate from her?

Hitherto we have treated of the origin and extent of the evils which afforded the reformers a pretext for the reformation; and we have also endeavored to point out the *proper* means of effecting reformation—the true method of solving the great problem of the sixteenth century. We will now proceed to examine the means adopted by the reformers for that alleged purpose, and will endeavor through them to account for the rapidity with which the reformation was diffused.

* Art. xxi. Anno Dom. 1530. Confessio Augustana.

† "Institut. Chrétiennes," l. iv, ch. ii, and "La Loi fondée," part. iii.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRUE CAUSES AND MANNER OF THE REFORMATION, AND THE MEANS BY WHICH IT WAS EFFECTED.

Saying of Frederick the great—What we mean to prove—Testimony of Hallam—Doctrines of Luther—Justification without works—Its dreadful consequences avowed—The "slave-will"—Man, a beast with two riders—Dissuasive from celibacy—An easy way to heaven—D'Aubigné's discreet silence—Testimony of the Diet of Worms on Luther's doctrines—An old lady emancipated—Protection of princes—Schlegel's testimony—The reformers flatter princes and pander to their vices—A reformed dispensation—Character of reformed princes—Their cupidity—Fed by Luther—Protestant restitution—Open violence and spoliation—The *modus operandi* of the reformation—Schlegel again—Abuse of the press—Vituperation and calumny—Policy of Luther's marriage—Apostate monks—Recapitulation—A distinction—The reformation "a reappearance of Christianity."

We believe it was Frederick the Great, of Prussia, who first made the well known remark, "that pride and avarice had caused the reformation in Germany, lawless love in England, and the love of novelty in France." Perhaps the greatest severity of this remark, is its strict historic truth. It, of course, was intended merely to designate the first and most prominent among a variety of other causes. Wm. Cobbett has proved—and no one has yet answered his arguments—that in England, the first cause alluded to above, was powerfully aided by cupidity, which fattened on the rich spoils of the church, and by the reckless pride of ascendancy, which revelled in, and was cemented by, the blood of vast numbers of innocent victims, whose only crime was their conscientious adherence to the religion of their fathers.

We will present a mass of evidence to prove that in Germany, the reformation, which was commenced in the

pride of revolt, was fed and kept alive by avarice and licentiousness, was propagated by calumny, by violence, and by pandering to the worst passions, and was consummated and rendered permanent by the fostering care of secular princes, without whose protection it would have died away and come to naught. This is strong language; but it is more than justified by the facts of history: not indeed as those facts have been travestied, miscolored and perverted by such partial writers as M. D'Aubigné; but, as they are clearly set forth by cotemporary historians, and as they appear in the original documents. We shall allege only such as are undoubted and clearly established from these sources.

But before we adduce this evidence, let us see what a very learned and enlightened living Protestant historian thinks on this subject, to the investigation of which he has devoted much labor. Mr. Hallam gives us the result of his researches in the following passages, which we quote from his latest work. "Whatever may be the bias of our minds as to the truth of Luther's doctrines, we should be careful, in considering the reformation as a part of the history of mankind, not to be misled by the superficial and ungrounded representations which we sometimes find in modern writers. *(M. D'Aubigné for example).* Such is this, that Luther, struck by the absurdity of the prevailing superstitions, was desirous of introducing a more rational system of religion; or, that he contended for freedom of inquiry, and the boundless privileges of individual judgment; or, what others have been pleased to suggest, that his zeal for learning and ancient philosophy led him to attack the ignorance of the monks and the crafty policy of the church, which withstood all liberal studies. These notions are merely fallacious refinements, as every man of plain understanding *(except M. D'Aubigné)* who is acquainted with the writings of the early reformers, or has considered their history, must acknowledge."*

* "History of Literature." Sup. Cit. vol. i, p. 165, sec. 60-61.

In another place, he has this remarkable passage: "the adherents to the church of Rome have never failed to cast two reproaches on those who left them: one, that the reform was brought about by intemperate and calumnious abuse, by outrages of an excited populace, or by the tyranny of princes; the other, that, after stimulating the most ignorant to reject the authority of their church, it instantly withdrew this liberty of judgment, and devoted all who presumed to swerve from the line drawn by law, to virulent obloquy, and sometimes to bonds and death. *These reproaches*, it may be a shame to us to own, *can be uttered and cannot be refuted.*"* After making this painful avowal, he enters upon a labored argument to prove that the reformation could have succeeded by no other means!†

The reformers, as we have seen, were not content with clamoring for the reform of abuses: they laid violent hands on the sacred deposit of the faith. Like Oza of old, they put forth their hands to the ark of God, mindless of Oza's fate!‡ Under the plea that the Catholic church had fallen into numerous and fatal doctrinal errors, and that the reformation could not be thorough, without the removal of these, they rejected many doctrines which the whole world had hitherto revered as the revelation of God; and substituted in their place new tenets, which they professed to find more conformable to the word of God. This is not the place to examine whether these new doctrines are true; all that our plan calls for at present, is to inquire what those doctrines were, and what was their practical bearing on the work of the reformation? Were they really calculated to exercise an influence beneficial to morals and to society? Were they adequate means to reform the church? As it would be tedious to exhibit even a brief summary of all the contradictory tenets held by the early reformers, or even by the early Lutherans themselves, we

* Ibid. p. 200, sec. 34. † Ibid. ‡ 2 Kings (or Samuel) vi, 6.

must confine ourselves to those broached and defended by Luther, the "father of the reformation." And we shall state nothing for which we will not exhibit chapter and verse from his own writings.*

The leading tenet of Luther's doctrine was, a belief in justification by faith alone without works. This is the key to his entire system. Let us hear the modest way in which he asserts this doctrine, one that he always styled "a fundamental article." "Well, then, I, Doctor Martin Luther, an unworthy evangelist of our Lord Jesus Christ, do confess this article, 'that faith alone without works justifies in the sight of God;' and I declare that, in spite of the emperor of the Romans, the emperor of the Turks, the emperor of the Tartars, the emperor of the Persians, the pope, all the cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, kings, princes, nobles, all the world, and all the devils, it shall stand unshaken for ever! That, if they will persist in opposing this truth, they will draw upon their heads the flames of hell. This is the true and holy gospel, and the declaration of me, Doctor Luther, according to the light given to me by the Holy Ghost."†

This declaration was made in 1531; and, according to M. D'Aubigné, who quotes Seckendorf, Luther's most ardent admirer, he received "this new light of the Holy Ghost" while visiting "Pilate's stair-case"‡ in Rome, a few years before he turned reformer. This we apprehend was an after-thought. Certain it is that, to get rid of the conclusive argument against this cardinal doctrine drawn

* Some of the modern editions of Luther's works have been greatly *expurgated* by his admirers. We shall quote from the oldest and most authentic editions, those of Wittemberg, of Jena, of Frankfort, of Altenberg, of Leipsic, and Geneva. That of Wittemberg was put forth by the immediate disciples of Luther.

† *Glossa in Edict. Imperiale.* Opera Lat. tom. xx. Apud D'Aubigné i, 172.

‡ Properly called the "scala santa," or "holy stairway;" from having been once consecrated by the Saviour's footsteps, while he was entering into the pretorium to be judged by Pilate.

From the Epistle of St. James, he rejected this Epistle "as one of straw;" and that, to confirm this doctrine still more, he boldly corrupted the text of St. Paul—Romans iii, 28) "for we account a man to be justified by faith without the works of the law"—by adding the word *alone* after *faith:* and that, when challenged on the subject, he made this characteristic reply: "So I will—so I order. Let my will stand for a reason."* So much had he this doctrine at heart!

He pushed this tenet to the utmost extremes, and boldly avowed all the consequences which logically flowed from it. With him, faith was every thing—works were nothing. On the 1st of August, 1521, he wrote from the Wartburg a letter to Melancthon, from which the following is an extract: "Sin, and sin boldly; but let your faith be greater than your sin. It is enough for us, through the riches of the glory of God, to have known the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Sin will not destroy in us the reign of the Lamb, although we were to commit fornication or to kill a thousand times in one day."† In his "Treatise on Christian liberty," which he sent along with a most brutal letter‡ to Leo X, in 1520, "as a pledge of his filial piety and love," he lays down as doctrines founded on the gospel: "the incompatibility of faith with works, which he regarded as so many sins; the subjection of the creature to the demon, even when he endeavors to escape from him; and his identification with sin, even when he rises towards his Creator—when his hand distributes alms, when his lips

* "*Sic volo—sic jubeo—stat pro ratione voluntas.*" He added: "I wish I had also said, 'without *any* of the works, of *all* laws!'"

† "Sufficit quod agnovimus per divitias gloriæ Dei Agnum qui tollit peccatum mundi: ab hoc non avellet nos peccatum etiamsi millies uno die fornicemur aut occidamus." Epist. Melanc. 1 Aug. 1521. Apud Audin, p. 178.

‡ See this savage letter in Audin, p. 110, 111. It was written before the papal bull had been issued, shortly after his conference with Miltz, in which he had given and received the kiss of peace!!

open to pray, or invoke a blessing, and even when he weeps and repents—he sins: 'for,' says he, 'all that is in us is crime, sin, damnation, and man can do nothing good.'"* On the contrary, sin is not imputed to those who have faith: "because," says he, "although I have sinned, Christ who is within me has not sinned: this Christ, in whom I believe, acts, thinks, and lives in me, and alone accomplishes the law."†

Another cardinal doctrine of Luther's, much akin to this, was the denial of free will, and the assertion that all our actions are the result of stern fatalism. He wrote a work expressly on "the slave will,"‡ and carried on a rude controversy with Erasmus on this subject. His principles in this matter are explicitly and openly avowed. According to him, free will is incompatible with the divine foreknowledge. "Let the Christian know, then, that God foresees nothing in a contingent manner; but that he foresees, proposes, and acts from his eternal and unchangeable will. This is the thunder-stroke which breaks and overturns free will."§ God is thus plainly the author of sin, and Luther shrinks not from the avowal! He maintains "that God excites us to sin, and produces sin in us:"‖ and that "God damns some who have not merited this lot, and others before they were born."¶ Man's nature, according to him, is thoroughly and radically corrupted: he is a mere automaton. "Man is like a beast of burden: if God sits in the saddle, he wills and

* Apud Audin, p. 111.

† Ibid. See *Epistola Lutheriana ad Leonem summum Pontificem. Liber de Libertate Christiana.* Wittemb. 1520, 4to.

‡ "*De Servo Arbitrio,*" in opposition to the usual term, "*liberum arbitrium.*"

§ De Servo Arbit. adv. Erasm. Roterod. Luth. Opp. Lat. Jenæ, tom. iii. p. 170, seqq.

‖ Opera Jenæ, iii, 199. Wittemb. tom. vi, fol. 522, 523. "*Dass Gott die menschen zur sünde antreibe, und alle laster in ihnem würcke.*"

¶ Ibid. Jenæ edit. iii, 207—Witt. vi, 534, 535—Altenb. iii, 249, 250.

goes whithersoever God wills; . . . if Satan ride him, he wills and goes whither Satan directs: nor is it in his power to determine his rider—the two riders contend for obtaining and possessing him.'"* This is truly a characteristic illustration of a most hideous doctrine!

In his famous speech at the diet of Worms, in 1521, he expressed his delight at the prospect that his doctrine would produce discord and dissension: "You must know that I have well weighed the dangers that I incur, the displeasure that I cause, and the hatred which my doctrine will excite in this world. I delight to see the word of God bring forth discord and dissension. This is the lot of the Saviour, who says: 'I am come not to bring peace but the sword; I am come to separate the son from the father.'"† Was there ever a more fiendish joy, or a more glaring perversion of God's holy word?

He rejected continence with horror, and looked on the law of celibacy as an "awful blindness—a relentless cruelty of the pope—a diabolical precept—an imposing of an obligation which is impossible to human nature."‡ In 1522 he wrote a letter to the knights of the Teutonic order, in which he urged them, by arguments pandering to the basest passions of the human heart, to rid themselves of this "diabolical" yoke. We almost shrink from transcribing the following passage from this appeal, which was, alas! too successful. "My friends, the precept of multiplying is older than that of continence enjoined by the councils" (and he should have added, sanctioned by the most solemn vows, voluntarily made, the

* "*Sic humana voluntas in medio posita est ceu jumentum: si insederit Deus, vult et vadit sicut vult Deus; . . . si insederit Satan, vult et vadit ut Satan: nec est in ejus arbitrio ad utrum sessorem currere, aut eum quærere, sed ipsi sessores certant ad ipsum obtinendum et possidendum.*" Opera, Jenæ, iii, 176, 177.

† Apud Audin, p. 153. D'Aubigné, ii, 235.

‡ "*Perinde facere qui continentiæ vivere instituunt, ac si quis excrementa vel lotium contra naturæ impetum retinere velit.*" Luther, Contra Impia Edicta Cæsaris, T. ii.

binding obligation of which he himself had recognized but one year before*): "it dates from Adam. It would be better to live in concubinage than in chastity. Chastity is an unpardonable sin; whereas concubinage, with God's assistance, should not make us despair of salvation."†

He rejected in fact every doctrine, and abolished every practice of the Catholic church, which was humbling to human pride, painful to corrupt nature, or which imposed a salutary restraint on the passions. Confession he rejected, as the "executioner of consciences."‡ He eschewed monastic vows, fasting and abstinence, and proscribed good works and free will. In his new-fangled religion, the ministers of God were no longer bound to say mass, or to read the divine office; this would have been an intolerable burden, incompatible with Christian liberty! In fact, he was no great advocate for prayer at all—especially for frequent prayer: "for," he says, "it is enough to pray once or twice; since God has said 'ask and you shall receive;' to continue always in prayer, is to show that we have not faith in God."§ He forgot to mention that Christ had also said: "pray always and faint not:" and St. Paul, "pray without intermission."

What, in fine, was left in his new system of Christianity to fulfil those essential conditions of discipleship, which our blessed Lord pointed out, when he said: "if any man will come after me, let him *deny himself* and *take up his cross*, and follow me?"‖ Or to imitate the example of St. Paul—whose great admirer Luther affected to be—when

* Supra, p. 61.

† "*In statu scortationis vel peccati, Dei præsidio implorato, de salute non desperandum.*" Ad Milites Ord. Teutonici, Opp. Jenæ, tom. ii, p. 211–216.

‡ "*Conscientiæ carnificina.*"

§ Letter to Bartholomew Von Starenburg, 1 Sept., 1523.—Audin, p. 208.

‖ Matth. xvi, 24.

he says of himself: "I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become reprobate?"*

M. D'Aubigné, though he professes to give a very detailed history of the reformation, found it *convenient*, however, to forget, or at least to pretermit most of the facts related above; which, however, are essential to the history! But they did not suit his purpose, which was to persuade the world, that Luther and his associates were new apostles of God, and that the reformation was but "the re-appearance of Christianity!" His whole view, in fact, of Luther's doctrine, and of the entire reformation, is a miserable perversion of history—an ill-contrived romance. His picture is no doubt viewed with delight by those for whose special benefit it was drawn; but it is false in almost every light and shade! Else why did he omit so many essential facts?

What was the necessary tendency of these new doctrines of Luther? Were they calculated to effect a reform in morals and religion? Or was their influence on society essentially evil? To aid us in answering these questions, we will adduce the evidence of a cotemporary official document of the Germanic empire—an extract from the decree of the Diet of Worms in 1521—which decree M. D'Aubigné professes to give us entire.† "The Augustine monk, Martin Luther, regardless of our exhortations, has madly attacked the holy church, and attempted to destroy it, by writings full of blasphemy. He has shamefully vilified the unalterable law of holy marriage; he has labored to excite the laity to imbrue their hands in the blood of their priests;‡ and, defying all authority, has incessantly excited the people to revolt, schism, war, murder, theft,

* 1 Corinth. ix, 27. † Vol. ii, p. 261 seqq.

‡ The Diet here cites Luther's works; and M. D'Aubigné furnishes the reference to the present works of the reformer.—Luther Opp. Lat. vii, 598.

incendiarism, and the utter destruction of the Christian faith. . . . In a word, and passing over many other evil intentions, this being, who is no man, but Satan himself, under the semblance of a man in a monk's hood, has collected in one offensive mass all the worst heresies of former ages, adding his own to the number." Making all proper allowance for the circumstance that this document emanated from a body opposed to Luther, it is still a satisfactory proof of the evil tendency of his doctrines. Would the great Charles V,—would the first princes of the empire—in an official document, have stated facts at random, and without sufficient warrant? They were competent witnesses of events passing under their own eyes; they could scarcely be deceived, and they would not have hazarded false statements, which could have been so readily refuted.

But, if the doctrines of Luther were not adapted to the reformation of the church, they were at least easy and flattering to human nature; and, under these points of view, they were powerful means of rapidly diffusing the pretended reformation which was predicated on them. Luther could hope through their instrumentality, to gain over to his party, the wicked of every class in society. To the corrupt among the priests and monks, he held out the inducements of getting rid of the painful duties of their state—of bidding adieu to vigils, to matins and to prayers —and of crowning their apostacy with the blooming garlands of hymen! To the unmortified—and these were a very large class—he promised exemption from confession, from fasts and from long prayers. To the proud and presumptuous—and their number was legion—he offered the flattering principle of private judgment in matters of religion; assuring them, that every one, no matter how stupid or ignorant, had an equal right, with the learned, and the talented, to expound the Scriptures for himself.

How consoling this assurance to the old lady, who, sitting in the chimney corner, had been hitherto content to

con her prayers in private—to abide by the decisions of the church, which Christ had commanded her to hear, under penalty of being reckoned "with heathens and publicans"—and to leave the thorny paths of theological controversy to the more skilful and learned! She awoke to new life—her eyes sparkled again with the joys of youth—and she burst forth into a canticle of praise to the Lord, for her emancipation from the degrading servitude of popery! And, what bright careers of glory were opened to the ambition of young students in the universities, who, through the new doctrines, could hope to shine in the pulpit, and to settle themselves advantageously in the world, *with their wives* and *families:* and all this without any sacrifice, or any great previous labor in preparing themselves for the ministry! Verily, as Melancthon had said to his dying mother: "the way of the reformers was more convenient"—and what mattered it, "if that of the Catholics was more safe!" This was a consideration of minor importance; or of weight only at the hour of death! And what thought *they* of death?

But the chief resource of Luther, for establishing and consolidating his new religion, lay in the fostering protection of princes. He understood this, and he accordingly determined to gain them over to his party, by the most immoderate flattery, and by pandering to their worst passions. The great and moderate Frederick Von Schlegel assures us of this. "Luther was by no means an advocate for democracy, like Zuinglius and Calvin,* but he asserted the absolute power of princes, though he made his advocacy subservient to his own religious views and projects. It was by such conduct and the influence which he thereby acquired, as well as by the sanction of the civil power, that the reformation was promoted and consolidated. Without this, Protestantism would have sunk

* We shall see in the sequel what kind of "advocates for democracy" they were.

into the lawless anarchy which marked the proceedings of the Hussites, and to which the war of the peasants rapidly tended; and it would have been inevitably suppressed, like all other popular commotions."* The whole history of the reformation proves the justice of these remarks.

Luther thoroughly understood his true policy in regard to princes, and he never failed to carry it out. Even as late as 1530, when Charles V was about to enter Augsburg to attend the diet assembled there, he cherished hopes of gaining over this great emperor to his party. In his letters and other writings about this time, he painted Charles V "as a man of God, an envoy of heaven, a new Augustus, the admiration and delight of the whole world."† But when the emperor published at that same diet his famous conciliatory decree—by which he merely allowed to the Protestants the free "enjoyment of their temples and creeds," but enjoined silence on them until the meeting of the general council—the whole scene changed. Charles was no longer "a new Augustus;" but "he and his counsellors were not even men, but 'gates of hell'—judges who could not judge his cause, and to whom he would not give up a hair of his head."‡

We have already seen how meanly subservient he was on all occasions to his immediate sovereign, the elector of Saxony. This prince was the most powerful protector of the reformation, and, as we shall see, reaped a golden harvest for his protection. But he had another motive for defending Luther and his partisans. Luther and Melancthon were the principal professors in his cherished university of Wittemberg; and their great talents had attracted to it vast numbers of youth from all parts of Germany. At the period of the reformation, the university became the focus of the new doctrines, and the ren-

* "Philosophy of History," vol. ii, p. 205, 6: edit. Appleton & Co. N. York, 1841.

† See the authorities quoted by Audin, p. 440. ‡ Ibid.

dezvous of all who favored them. The attractive novelty, the stirring interest, the startling boldness of these new tenets, together with the rude but overpowering eloquence of Luther, and the winning graces and versatile genius of Melancthon, rendered this university famous throughout Germany. The elector could not but look with complacency on the men who shed such lustre on an institution which he had erected, and the prosperity of which was identified with his own glory. This was one of the reasons which first inclined him to favor Luther. It is not a little remarkable, too, that this same university of Wittemberg was erected chiefly from the proceeds of those very indulgences, the inveighing against which was the first movement of the reformation!

A remarkable instance of Luther's mean subserviency to princes, is the permission which he and his chief partizans gave to Philip, landgrave of Hesse, to have two wives at once! This fact is as astounding as it is undoubted. Philip had been married for sixteen years to Christiana, daughter of George, duke of Saxony; and he had already several children. According to Menzel, a Protestant historian, he was "violent and passionate, unfaithful and superstitious."* But he was a good Lutheran, nay, one of the most powerful friends of the reformation; and he read his Bible incessantly. He became enamored of Margaret Saal, a maid of honor to his sister Elizabeth. She proved inexorable, and the landgrave lost his appetite, and was seized with a fit of despondency. In this distress, he had recourse to his Bible: he opened it at the fifth chapter of Genesis, and, finding that Lamech had had two wives at once, he resolved to imitate his example.

He however thought it advisable to seek counsel at the hands of the principal reformers. Through Martin Bucer, a learned reformed theologian, and a devoted courtier of

* *Neuere Geschichte der Deutchen*, tom. i.

his, he proposed his case of conscience to the "new apostles" of Wittemberg. He stated "that he could not abstain from fornication, and that he must expect eternal damnation unless he changed his life: that, when he espoused Christiana, it was not through inclination or love: that the officers of his court and her maids of honor might be examined regarding her temper, her charms, and her love of wine: that he had read in the Old Testament that many holy personages, Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon, had many wives, and yet pleased God: and that, finally, he had resolved to renounce his licentious habits, which he could not do, unless he could get Margaret for his wife. He therefore asks Luther and Philip to grant him what he requested."

The case was plainly and roundly stated; and the answer was no less direct. It was divided into twenty four articles, and was signed by the eight principal reformers of Wittemberg—Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, Anthony Corvin, Adam, I. Leningen, J. Vinfert, and D. Melanther. The twenty-first article runs as follows: "If your highness is resolved to marry a second wife, we judge that it should be done privately, as we have said when speaking of the dispensation you have asked for. There should be no one present, but the bride and a few witnesses who are aware of the circumstance, and who would be bound to secrecy, as if under the seal of confession. Thus all opposition and great scandal will be avoided; for it is not unusual for princes to have concubines, and although the people take scandal at it, the more enlightened will suspect the truth. We ought not to be very anxious about what the world will say, provided the conscience be at rest. Thus we approve of it. Your highness has then, in this writing, our approbation in all the exigencies that may occur, as also the reflections we have made on them."

The marriage took place on the 3d of March, 1540, in the presence of Melancthon, Bucer, and other theologians.

The marriage contract was drawn up by a Lutheran doctor, and duly signed by a notary public. In this instrument Philip declares "that he does not take Margaret lightly, or through contempt of the civil law; but solely for other considerations, and because, without a second wife, he could not live godly, or merit heaven!"* Was there ever a more startling instance of utter depravity and unprincipled sycophancy! Here, then, is a Protestant "indulgence," in the very sense attached to the term by Protestant writers! And these men claimed to be sent by God to reform the church!!†

By such means as these did the reformers secure the protection of princes. What was the character of such of these as espoused the reformation? Were they men whose lives reflected honor on the new religion, and gave a pledge of the purity of motives which had led to its adoption? Let us see. In the first place, there was John, elector of Saxony, who, according to Menzel,‡ was one of the most gluttonous princes of his age, fond of wine and of good cheer, and whose stomach, overcharged with excessive feeding, was supported by an iron circle. "He had enriched his sideboard—the best furnished in all Germany—with vessels of all sorts taken from the

* See the *Instrumentum Copulationis Philippi landgrave et Margaritæ le Saal*, given in full by Bossuet, *Variations*, vol. i. See also Ad. Menzel, a Protestant, tom. ii, pp. 179, 192; and Audin, p. 479.

† Those who wish to see all the documents connected with this disgraceful proceeding, are referred to Bossuet's "Variations," book vi, and to Bayle's Dictionary, art. Luther. They were kept hidden for a long time, until Charles Lewis, the elector palatine, published them to the world. There is no doubt whatever as to their genuineness. Bayle twits the reformers on their mean subserviency to the landgrave, who, he shrewdly suspects, had thrown out "certain menaces" in case of their refusal to grant the asked-for dispensation; and made them certain munificent promises in case of their compliance. The latter he fully redeemed; for after the death of Frederick, elector of Saxony, in 1525, he became the great Ajax of the reformation party in Germany. M. D'Aubigné admits this.

‡ Ad. Menzel, *Neuere Geschichte*, tom. i, fol. 338.

refectories of the monasteries, or the sacristies of the churches."* He embraced eagerly a religion which had abolished fasting, and which permitted him to indulge his favorite appetite without restraint. Then came the *pious* and *scrupulous* Philip, landgrave of Hesse, whose troubled conscience was soothed by the *panacea* to which we have just alluded. The second pillar of the reformation had inscribed on the clothes of the domestics who served him at table, the initials V. D. M. I. Æ., signifying *Verbum Domini manet in æternum*—"the word of the Lord remaineth for ever!" Lastly came Wolfgang, prince of Anhalt, whose stupid ignorance was proverbial: and "Ernest and Francis Lunenberg, who did not trouble their vassals to pillage the churches, but with their own hands despoiled the tabernacles of their sacred vessels."† Such were the princes to whose patronage the reformation was indebted for its success and permanency!

To secure their protection, which was essential to the triumph of his cause, Luther left no means untried. He recklessly appealed to the worst passions which sway the human bosom. He held out to them, as baits, the rich booty of the Catholic churches and monasteries. He said to them, in a publication entitled *Argyrophilax:* "You will find out, within a few months, how many hundred thousand gold pieces the monks and that class of men possess within a small portion of your territory."‡ He acknowledged, in one of his sermons, "that the church ostensories made many converts to the new gospel."§ And M. Audin is entirely correct in his caustic remark, "that the convent spoils resembled the martyrs' blood,

* Audin, p. 424. † Id. p. 425.

‡ "*Experiemini intra paucos menses, quot centum aureorum millia unius exiguæ ditionis vestræ monachi et id genus hominum possideant.*" Cf. Cochlæus, p. 149.

§ "*Viele sind noch gut evangelisch, weil es noch Catholische monstranzen gibt.*" Luther Pred. xii, apud Jak. Marx. p. 174, and Menzel, tom. i, pp. 371–9.

mentioned by Tertullian, and brought forth daily new disciples to the reformation."*

It was cupidity that induced Albert of Brandenburg to apostatize from the Catholic church, "that he might plunder, with a safe conscience, the country of Prussia, which belonged to the Teutonic order"—of which order he was superior general—"and which he erected into a hereditary principality."† Francis Von Sickengen was another of these spoilers, who, at the head of twelve thousand men, "invaded the archbishopric of Treves, tracking his path by the blood he shed, the churches he pillaged, and the licentious excesses of his soldiery."‡ He was but one of those powerful robbers who, according to the testimony of an ancient historian, then converted Germany, once so powerful and noble, into a den of thieves.§ The candid Melancthon "avowed that in the triumph of the reformation the princes looked not to the purity of doctrine, or the propagation of light, to the triumph of a creed, or the improvement of morals, but only regarded the profane and miserable interests of this world."‖

The rich spoils of the Catholic church and of the monasteries not only induced many princes of the Germanic body to embrace the reformation, but also caused them to persevere in the cause they had thus espoused. In the famous diet of Augsburg, in 1530, the conciliatory course of Melancthon, who there represented the reformed party, bade fair to heal the rupture, by reconciling the Protestants to the Catholic church. But the Catholic theologians insisted on two things: that the married priests should abandon their wives, and that the Protestant princes should

* P. 345. † Rotteck, p. 93. Apud Audin. Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ "Potentissima Germania et nobilissima, sed ea tota nunc unum latrocinium est, et ille inter nobiles gloriosior qui rapacior." Campanus ad Freher-Script. German. tom. ii, p. 294, 295.

‖ "Sie bekümmerten sich gar nicht um die lehre, es sie ihnen blosz um die freiheit, und die herrschaft zu thun." Apud Audin, p. 343.

restore the goods of the church upon which they had seized. The former condition would probably have been complied with; but, as Erasmus remarks, "the Lutheran princes would not hear any thing about restitution."* The same insurmountable difficulty interposed when, five years later, Rome made her last effort towards bringing back the Protestant party to the bosom of the Catholic church. The benevolent labors of Cardinal Verger, legate of Paul III, in 1535, might not have proved abortive, but for the indomitable insolence of Luther,† and the refusal of the princes of his party to disgorge their ill-gotten plunder.

After all this, we can scarcely restrain a smile, on hearing the lamentations of Luther over the rapacity of the princes of his party, whom he himself had excited to the unholy work of spoliation. "To the d—l," he cried out in a rage, "with senators, manor lords, princes, and mighty nobles, who do not leave for the preachers, the priests, the servants of the gospel, wherewith to support their *wives* and *children!*"‡ They were, it seems, more rapacious than even *he* could have desired. "They gave, with admirable generosity, the sacred vessels of the secularized monastery to the parish priest, provided, however, he had adopted Lutheranism. The rest went to their mistresses, their courtiers, their dogs, and their horses. Some, who were as greedy as the landgrave of Hesse, kept even the habits and sacerdotal vestments, the tapestries, the chased silver vases, and the vessels of the sanctuary."§ They would not abide by Luther's rules for the partition of the confiscated property:‖ and hence the wrath of the reformer!

He indeed occasionally condemned this rapacity in a voice of thunder: he sometimes clothed himself in the

* "Res propemodum ad concordiam deducta est, nisi quod Lutherani principes nihil audire voluerunt de restituendo." Erasm. Ep. p. 998.

† For an account of the outrageous conduct of Luther to the legate, and of the whole negotiation, see Audin, p. 474, seqq.

‡ Table Talk, cited by Jak. Marx, p. 175. § Audin, 346. ‖ Ib.

garb of a messenger of peace, and bewailed the violence and other disorders which he had himself occasioned, and even caused, by his frequent appeals to the passions. But he could not arrest the course of the turbid torrent of passion, which he himself had in the first instance caused to flow. As well might he have labored to turn back the waters of the Rhine! Had he not, in one of his inflammatory appeals to the princes of the empire, used the following language, "There is Rome, Romagna, and the duchy of Urbino: there is Bologna, and the states of the church; take them: they belong to you: take, in God's name, what is your own?"* Had he not threatened them with the wrath of heaven, in case they did not seize on the property of the monasteries?† Had he not, at almost every page of his works, made "a brutal appeal against the priests, a maddening shout against the convents—in a word, had he not preached up the sanctification of robbery, the canonization of rapine?"‡

Erasmus bears abundant evidence to the violence which almost every where marked the progress of the reformation. We will give an extract from one of his writings, premising the remark that he was an eye-witness of what he relates, and not at least a violent enemy of the reformers. "I like to hear Luther say," says he, "that he does not wish to take their revenues from the priests and monks, who have not any other means of support. This is the case probably at Strasburg. But is it so elsewhere? Truly it is laughable to say: 'we will give food to those who apostatize; let others starve if they please.' Still more laughable to hear them protest that they do not wish to harm any one. What! is it no injury to drive away canons from their churches, monks from their monasteries, and to plunder bishops and abbots? But 'we do not kill!' Why not? Because your victims take the

* Opp. edit. Jenæ, tom. viii, fol. 209-248. A. D. 1545.

† "Gottloss seyen dienigen die diese güter nicht an sich zögen, und sie besser verwendeten, als die mönche. ‡ Audin, p. 349.

prudent precaution of running away. 'We let our enemies live peaceably among us.' Who are your enemies? Are all Catholics? Do our bishops and priests regard themselves as secure in the midst of you? If you are so mild and tolerant, wherefore these emigrations, and these multiplied complaints addressed to the throne? . . . But then, why destroy the churches which they built?"*

It is curious to mark the *modus operandi* of the reformers in doing their godly work of violence and spoliation. We will furnish a few instances out of many. "At Bremen, during Lent, the citizens got up a masquerade, in which the popes, the cardinals, and nuns were represented. On the place of public execution they raised a pile, on which all these personifications of Catholicity were thrown, and burnt, amidst shouts of joy. The remainder of the day was spent in celebrating, by large libations, the downfall of popery."†

"At Zwickau, on Shrove Tuesday, hare-nets were laid on the market-place; and monks and nuns, hunted by the students, fell into them, and were caught. At a short distance was the statue of St. Francis, tarred and feathered!" Tobias Schmidt, the cotemporary historian of this outrage, here exclaims: "Thus fell, at Zwickau, popery, and thus rose there the pure light of the gospel!"‡ He assures us, in the same place, that "a band of citizens attacked the convent, whose gates they broke, and, when they had pillaged the chests and the treasures, threw the books about and broke the windows:"§ the town authorities, meantime, standing looking on, with their arms crossed, in perfect composure, without even affecting indignation! Similar scenes were enacted elsewhere. "At Elemberg, the pastor's house was given up

* "In Pseudo-Evangelicos." Epist. 47, lib. xxxi. London, Flesher.

† Arnold, l. c. th. 2, bd. 16, kap. 6, s. 60. Apud Audin, p. 347.

‡ "Also ist das Pabsthum abgeschafft und hingegen die evangelische reine lehre fortegeplanzt worden." Tob. Schmidt, p. 386.

§ Ibid. p. 384. Apud Audin, p. 348.

for several hours to pillage; and one of the students, who was a conspicuous actor in this scene, which excited the laughter of the mob, clothed himself in priests' vestments, and made his entry on an ass into the church."*

We must also briefly state the tactics of Luther's great patron, John, elector of Saxony, while gallantly attacking a monastery of poor monks, or a convent of defenceless women. He did not seek to stain his victory with blood; he sought rather the spoils of war. M. Audin compares him very appropriately to Verres, the rapacious Roman proconsul of Sicily, whom Cicero lashed with his withering invective. "The proconsul of Sicily was not more ingenious than Duke John of Saxony in plundering a monastery. Some days before opening the campaign, he was accustomed to send and demand the register of the house, and then he set out with a brisk detachment of soldiers. They surrounded the monastery; the abbot was summoned, and the prince, holding the registry in his hand, caused every thing contained in it to be delivered."†

This illustrious example was followed up by the civil authorities at Rosteck, Torgau, and other places. An old chronicle of Torgau, printed in 1524, minutely describes the revolting particulars of a nocturnal excursion made to the Franciscan convent of the city, by Leonard Koeppe and some other young students, who made an open boast of their cruelty and profligacy on the occasion.‡ At Magdeburg the magistrates resolved to act more humanely. They put a stop to the work of plunder, and allowed the monks to remain quietly in their cells during the rest of their lives; "provided, however, they laid aside the religious habit, and embraced the reforma-

* See "Das resultat meiner wanderungen," &c. Von Julius Höninghaus, p. 339; and Audin, ibid.

† Arnold, *loc. cit.* th. 2. Bd. 16, kap. 6, 568, cited by Höninghaus, supra.

‡ Arnold, *ut supra.*

tion:"* and many of them, alas! preferred apostacy to starvation. Such as would not apostatize were, in most places, driven from their convents, "were reduced to beg their bread, and were the victims of heartless calumny. They seemed abandoned by all. Art was as ungrateful as mankind: it forgot that it owed its progress to their labors. The people laughed when they saw them pass half naked, and had no word of pity, no sigh of compassion, for so many unfortunate creatures. Whither could they go? The roads were not safe; in those times there were knights who scoured the high-ways and hunted after monks, whom they took pleasure" in making eunuchs "for the greater glory of God!"†

With all these facts before our eyes, can we wonder at the testimony borne by the diet of Worms, quoted above, as to the character and tendency of the Lutheran doctrines? Protestants have acknowledged that the reformation was indebted to this violence for its successful establishment in Germany and the countries of the north. We have already seen the testimony of Melancthon. Jurieu, the famous Calvinist minister who had the conference with the great Bossuet, acknowledges "that Geneva, Switzerland, the republics and the free cities, the electors, and the German princes, England, Scotland, Sweden, and Denmark, got rid of popery, and established the reformation, by the aid of the civil power."‡ A sweeping admission, truly, as candid as it is clearly founded on the facts of history!

The great Frederick Von Schlegel has well observed that "Protestantism was the work of man; and it appears in no other light even in the history which its own disciples have drawn of its origin. The partisans of the re-

* Marcheineke, th. 2, s. 41. Audin, *ibid.*

† Ulrich Hutten boasts of this. Epist. ad Lutherum, part ii, p. 128. Cf. Audin, p. 200.

‡ Cf. Jak. Marx. "Die Ursachen der Schnellen verbreitung der Reformation," p. 164; apud Audin, p. 343.

formation proclaimed indeed, at the outset, that, if it were more than a human work, it would endure, and that its duration would serve as a proof of its divine origin. But surely no one will consider this an adequate proof, when he reflects that the great Mohammedan heresy, which, more than any other, destroys and obliterates the divine image stamped on the human soul, has stood its ground for full twelve hundred years; though this religion, if it proceed from no worse source, is at best a human work."*

He says also: "that the reformation was established in Denmark chiefly, though not exclusively, as in Sweden, by the sovereign power: in Iceland its establishment was almost the work of violence."† True, he indicates the opinion that Protestantism was introduced into other German countries "by the torrent of popular opinion:"‡ but we have already seen what kind of a torrent this was, what ruins it left in its course; how its waters were swollen by the rude eloquence of Luther and his partizans; and how their maddening violence was increased by the lawless passions of the princes who espoused the cause of the reformation!

Our summary of the means employed to promote the success of the reformation would be incomplete, without adverting to one other cause which contributed, at least as much as those already named, to produce that effect. We allude to the flagrant abuse of the press, which, during that period, poured forth a torrent of ridicule, invective, abuse, misrepresentation, and calumny against the Catholics, flooding all Germany with pestiferous publications. The violence of the pulpit powerfully seconded that of the press. Luther thundered from the pulpit of All Saints at Wittemberg, as well as from those of the other principal cities of Saxony. He lashed, with his burning invectives, popes, bishops, priests, and monks:

* "Philosophy of History," ii, 218. † Ibid. p. 225. ‡ Ib. 224.

wherever his words fell they were a consuming fire. Indefatigable in his exertions, he published book after book, inflammatory pamphlet after inflammatory pamphlet, against the abominations of Rome. His books were eagerly sought after, and as greedily devoured. That "On the Captivity of Babylon," in which he painted the pope as Antichrist, went rapidly through ten editions! The annual book-fairs at Leipsic and Frankfort never before presented so animated a spectacle, or drove so brisk a business.

The works of the champions of Catholicity—of Eck, Emser, Prierias, and Hochstraet—found not so ready a sale. They had not the overweening charm of novelty; they dealt not in such rude denunciations; they were not so replete with ridicule or vulgar conceits! Even the veteran Erasmus, who had been erewhile styled "the prince of letters," "the star of Germany," "the high-priest of polite literature"—even the witty, and polished, and classical Erasmus could not find purchasers for his *Hyperaspides* and other works which he had published, after he had at length consented to enter the lists with Luther! His glory had faded, and the book-publishers complained of having to keep his works on hand unsold!

Many causes contributed to this result. In that period of maddening excitement, nothing suited the popular palate which was not new and startling. The calm and dignified defence of truth, alas! now grown antiquated and obsolete, could not cope with the exciting character and versatile graces of error. It has been ever so. Perverse human nature has ever been inclined to relish what is most agreeable to its passions. It more readily believes what is evil than what is good, especially when the former is served up with the winning graces of rhetoric, and seasoned with sarcasm, ridicule, and denunciation. Besides, the press sent forth the works of the reformers neatly and correctly printed; whereas those of the Catholics were often so clumsily executed as to excite ridicule and dis-

gust. The principal book sellers had joined the reform party, and many of the apostate monks had exchanged their former occupation of transcribing manuscripts for that of type-compositors and proof-readers in the principal printing establishments. The press thus became almost wholly subservient to the Protestant party; and the recreant monks became the most zealous champions of the new opinions.

A Catholic book which passed through their hands was generally mutilated, or at least printed with great negligence. Cochlæus and others complain of this injustice. He says "that the works of Catholics were often so badly printed that they did more service to the Lutheran party than to their own cause; and that the Frankfort merchants openly laughed at their clumsy execution."*

Froben, the great bookseller of Basle, made a splendid fortune by selling the works of Luther, which he reproduced in every form, and published at the cheapest rates. In a letter to the reformer, he chuckles with delight over his success: "All your works are bought up; I have not ten copies on hand: never did books sell so well."† Erasmus, in a letter to Henry VIII of England, complains that "he could find no printer who would dare publish any thing against Luther. Were it against the pope," he adds, "there would be no difficulty."‡

The great Bellarmine, who, towards the close of the sixteenth century, undertook the herculean task of refuting the works of the reformers—a task which he executed in a most masterly and triumphant manner—assures us

* "Ea tamen neglectim, ita festinanter et vitiose imprimebant, ut majorem gratiam eo obsequio referrent Lutheranis quam Catholicis. Si quis eorum justiorem Catholicis operam impenderent, hi a cæteris in publicis mercatibus Frankofordiæ ac alibi, vexabantur et ridebantur, velut papistæ et sacerdotum servi." Cochl. p. 58, 59.

† Opp. Lutheri, tom. i, p. 388, 389.

‡ Epist. Erasmi, p. 752. For further particulars, see Audin, p. 337, seqq.

"that there were few among the Protestant party who did not write something, and that their books not only spread like a cancer, but that they were diffused over the land like swarms of locusts.* Books of every size, from the ponderous folio to the humble pamphlet, were scattered through Germany on the wings of the press. And what were the weapons which these productions wielded with so great effect? Were they those of truth and of sound argument? Or were they those of low abuse, scurrilous misrepresentation, and open calumny? If there is any truth in history, the latter were put in requisition much oftener than the former. Catholic doctrines travestied and misrepresented—Catholic practices ridiculed—Catholic bishops and priests vilified and openly calumniated—these were the means which the reformers employed with so murderous an effect.†

And though all sins should not in justice be visited on their children in the faith, yet truth compels the avowal that, in these respects at least, they have not proved recreant disciples. This is still the panoply of Protestant warfare! We wish from our hearts it were otherwise! The poet's remark is true both of the first reformers and

* "Rari sunt apud adversarios qui non aliquid scribunt, quorum libri non jam ut cancer serpent, sed velut agmina locustarum volitant." Opp. tom. i, de Controv. in Præfat.

† To calumny might be added forgery, which was not uncommon in the palmy days of the reformation. In fact, Whitaker, a Protestant parson, says that it was peculiar to the reformed party. We will allude to one notorious instance in Germany. Otho Pack, vice-chancellor of Duke George of Saxony, forged a pretended Catholic plot, which he professed to have learned by prying into the secrets of the duke. His forgery caused the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse to take up arms, which they however laid down when the falsehoods of this wretch were detected. Yet the forgery, though thus exposed, was greedily seized up, and published all over Germany; and there are yet several writers who speak of the conspiracy it had fabricated at the league of Passau! Titus Oates had a predecessor, it seems, in Germany, though he far surpassed him in wickedness.

of their modern disciples, in their writings against the Catholic church:

> "A hideous figure of their face they drew,
> Nor hues nor looks, nor colors true:
> And this grotesque design exposed to public view."*

We shall make a few specifications, to prove that we have not done injustice to the character of the writings published by the early reformers. One means of attacking the character of the Catholics, was that of the Dialogue, invented by Ulrich von Hutten, one of the most unscrupulous writers of the reform party. It consisted in introducing, with dramatic effect, the various distinguished men of both sides, the Catholic and the Protestant—and letting them speak out their own sentiments. These dialogues were often acted on the stage, with great effect among the populace. The Catholics were travestied, and made to appear in the most ridiculous light; while their adversaries were always victorious. Two of these principal scenic representations were designed to ridicule two of the chief champions of Catholicity in Germany—Doctors Hochstraet and Eck. The lowest humor —with certain specimens of which we will not dare sully our pages—was employed against these distinguished divines.† The result was, that they became objects of contempt throughout Germany. This was *one* way to answer their arguments!

Every one, who has glanced at the history of those turbulent times, is familiar with the vulgar legends of the "Pope-Ass and Monk Calf," published by Melancthon and Luther, and circulated with prodigious effect. The "Pope-Ass" was extracted from the bottom of the Tiber in 1494; and the "Monk-Calf," was discovered at Fri-

* Dryden.

† The curious are referred, for copious extracts from these "dialogues," to Audin, p. 196, seqq.

burg, in Misnia, in 1523.* Lucas Kranach, a painter of the time, sculptured this vulgar conceit on wood; and this illustration accompanied the description of the two monsters. What surprises us most is, that the temperate Melancthon should have lent himself to this low ribaldry, which was then current for wit!

Erasmus and other cotemporary writers, openly accused the reformers of gross calumny. The former alleges many facts to justify his charge. "Those people are profuse of calumnies. They circulated a report of a canon, who complained of not finding Zurich as moral after the preaching of Zuinglius as before. . . . In the same spirit of candor they have accused another priest of libertinism, whom I, and all other persons acquainted with him, know to be pure in word and action. They have calumniated the canon because he hates sectaries; and the priest, because, after having manifested an inclination to their doctrines, he suddenly abandoned them."†

We might fill a volume with specimens of the scurrilous abuse and wicked calumnies of Luther against the popes, bishops, monks, and Catholic priesthood! We consult brevity, and furnish but one or two instances from his Table-Talk, which abounds with such specimens of decency. "The monks are lineal descendants of Satan. When you wish to paint the devil, muffle him up in a monk's habit."‡ Elsewhere he says, "that the devil strangled Emser,"§ and other Catholic clergymen.

Luther's marriage was not only a sacrilegious violation of his solemn vows—it was also a master-stroke of policy. Through its influence, he secured the adherence and per-

* "Interpretatio duorum horribilium monstrorum," &c., per Philippum Melancthonem et Martinum Lutherum—inter Opp. Luth. tom. ii, p. 392.

† "In Pseudo-Evangelicos," Epist. lib. xxxi, 47. London, Flesher.

‡ "Table Talk," p. 109, where he adds: "What a roar of laughter there must be in hell when a monk goes down to it!" Cf. Audin, p. 395, and also p. 393, seqq.

§ Ibid.

severing aid of a whole army of apostate monks, who eagerly followed his example. Until he took this decisive step, marriage among the clergy and monks was viewed with ridicule, if not with abhorrence by the people. After his marriage, it became on the contrary a matter of boast: priests, monks, and nuns hastened to "the ale-pope of the Black Eagle," to obtain this strange absolution from their vows plighted to heaven: and he received them with open arms, and granted them an "Indulgence," which never pope had granted before! Sacrilegious impurity stalked abroad with shameless front throughout Germany.

The married priests became the most untiring friends of the reform, to which they were indebted for their emancipation from popery, and for their *wives*. We have seen them already in the book shops and the printing presses. Many of them obtained their livelihood, by circulating Lutheran pamphlets through the country.* Others "took their stand near the church-gates, and often, during the divine offices, exhibited caricatures of the pope and the bishops."† They carried on a relentless war against the pope, *con amore;* and it is remarked, that few, if any of these married priests and monks, ever repented, or relented in their opposition against the Catholic church! Luther thus, by his marriage, raised up a whole army of zealous and efficient partisans, whose co-operation powerfully aided the progress of reform.‡

Such then were some of the principal means adopted by the reformers and their partisans, for carrying out the work of the reformation. Were they such as God could have sanctioned? Could a cause indebted to such means for its success be from heaven? On the other hand, considering the corrupt state of society in Germany, at the

* "Infinitus jam erat numerus qui victum ex Lutheranis libris quæritantes, in speciem bibliopolarum longe lateque per Germaniæ provincias vagabantur." Cochlæus, p. 58.

† Ibid.

‡ Cf. Audin, p. 337, seq.

beginning of the sixteenth century, can we wonder at the great success which attended a movement promoted by such means? We would be suprised, indeed, on the contrary, if similar success had not attended it, under all the circumstances of the case.

The distinctive doctrines of the reformation, throwing off the wholesome restraints of the old religion, flattering pride and pandering to passion—the protection of powerful princes, secured by feeding their cupidity and catering to their basest passions—the furious excitement of the people, fed by maddening appeals from the pulpit and the press, made to revel in works of spoliation and violence—this excitement, lashed into still greater fury by the constant employment of ridicule, low raillery, misrepresentation and calumny of every person and of every thing Catholic—and the marriage of many apostate priests and monks, binding them irrevocably to the new doctrines—can we wonder that all these causes combined—and acting too upon an age and country avowedly depraved—should have produced the effect of rapidly diffusing the *soi disant* reformation?

We do not of course mean to imply, that all who embraced the reformation were corrupt, or led by evil motives: we have no doubt that many were deceived by the specious appearance of piety. This was especially the case with the common people, who often followed the example and obeyed the teaching of their princes and pastors, without taking much trouble to ascertain the right. But we have intended to speak more particularly of the leading actors in the great drama; and to paint the chief parts they played on the stage.

Much less would we be understood, as indiscriminately and wantonly censuring Protestants of the present day. A broad line of distinction should be drawn between the first teachers and the first disciples of error, and those who have inherited it through a long line of ancestry. The latter might be often without great censure, where the for-

mer would be wholly inexcusable. The strong and close meshes which the prejudices of early education have woven around them—the dense and clouded medium, through which they have been accustomed to view the sun of Catholic truth—the strong influence of parental authority and of family ties—and many such causes, combine to keep them in error. Besides, history, which should be a witness of truth, has been polluted in its very sources: and the injustice which its voice has done to the truth, has been accumulating for centuries. But can Protestants of the present day, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, hold themselves inexcusable, if they neglect to examine both sides of the question, with all the diligence and attention that so grave a subject demands?

To enable them to do this the more easily, was one principal motive that induced us to review the partial and unfounded statements of M. D'Aubigné. If it be thought, that our picture of the causes and manner of the reformation and of the means to which it owed its success, is too dark, we beg leave to refer to the facts and authorities we have alleged. If there be any truth in history, our painting has not been too highly colored. Had we adduced all the evidence bearing on the subject, the coloring might have been still deeper! We had to examine and refute M. D'Aubigné's flippant assertions: that the reformers were chosen instruments of heaven for a divine work; and that the "reformation was but the reappearance of Christianity."

A "reappearance of Christianity," forsooth! It is from the facts accumulated above, such a "reappearance," as darkness is of light! Strip the reformation of all that it borrowed from Catholicism—let it appear in its own distinctive character, in all its naked deformity; and it has scarcely one feature in common with early Christianity. Did the apostles preach doctrines which pandered to the passions of mankind? Did they flatter princes, by offering to them the plunder of their neighbors, and by allowing

them to have two wives at once, to quiet their troubled conscience? Did they employ the weapons of ridicule, sarcasm, and calumny against their adversaries? Did they excite their followers to deeds of lawless violence against the established order of things? Did they break their solemn engagements to heaven? The reformers did all this and more, as we have shown.

CHAPTER V.

THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND.

"The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil; and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape."—*Shakspeare.*

The reformation in Switzerland more radical than that in Germany—Yet like it—Sows dissensions—Zuingle warlike and superstitious—Claims precedency over Luther—*Black* or *white*—Precursory disturbances—Aldermen deciding on faith—How the fortress was entrenched—Riot and conflagration—Enlightenment—Protestant martyrs—Suppression of the mass—*Solemnity* of the reformed worship—Downright paganism—The reformation and matrimony—Zuingle's marriage and misgivings—Romance among nuns—How to get a husband—Perversion of Scripture—St. Paul on celibacy—Recapitulation.

Before we proceed to examine the manifold influences of the reformation, it may be well briefly to glance at the history of its establishment in Switzerland. M. D'Aubigné devotes two whole books* to this portion of his history, which, as it concerns his own fatherland, is evidently a favorite topic with him. Our limits will not permit us to follow him through all his tedious and *romantic* details: we will content ourselves with reviewing some of his leading statements.

After what we have already said concerning the causes and manner of the reformation in Germany, it will scarcely be necessary to dwell at great length on that of Switzerland. The one was but a "reappearance" of the other—to use one of our author's favorite words. The same great features marked both revolutions, with this only difference: that the Swiss was more radical and more thorough, and therefore more to M. D'Aubigné's taste. Like the

* Book viii, vol. ii, p. 267 to 400: and book xi, vol. iii, p. 255 to 341.

German, however, its progress was every where signalized by dissensions, civil commotions, rapine, violence and bloodshed. And like the German, it was also indebted for its permanent establishment to the interposition of the civil authorities. Without this, neither revolution would have had either consistency or permanency. M. D'Aubigné himself bears unwilling testimony to all these facts, though, as usual, he suppresses many things of vital importance. We will supply some of his omissions, and avail ourselves of his concessions, as we proceed.

The reformation found the thirteen Swiss cantons united, and in peace among themselves and with all the world. It sowed disunion among them, and plunged them into a civil war, that threatened rudely to pluck up by the roots the venerable old tree of liberty which, centuries before, their Catholic forefathers had planted and watered with their blood! The shrines sacred to the memory of William Tell, Melchtal, and Fürst, the fathers of Swiss independence, were attempted to be rudely desecrated: and the altars at which their forefathers had worshipped in quietness for ages were recklessly overturned. The consequences of this attempt to subvert the national faith by violence, were most disastrous. The harmony of the old Swiss republic was destroyed, and the angel of peace departed forever from the hills and the valleys of Switzerland! That this picture is not too highly colored, the following brief summary of facts will prove.

The four cantons of Zurich, Berne, Schaffhausen, and Basle, which first embraced the reformation, began very soon thereafter to give evidence of their turbulent spirit. They formed a league against the cantons which still resolved to adhere to the Catholic faith. One article of their alliance forbade any of the confederates to transport provisions to the Catholic cantons. Arms were in consequence taken up on both sides, and a bloody contest ensued. Ulrich Zuingle, the father of the reformation in Switzerland, marched with the troops of the Protestant par-

ty, and fell, bravely fighting with them "the battles of the Lord," on the 11th of Oct. 1531! Did he in this give any evidence of the apostolic spirit, which M. D'Aubigné ascribes to him? Did ever an apostle die on the field of battle, while seeking the lives of his fellow mortals? He was as superstitious, as he was fierce. The historians of his life tell us, that a little before the battle he was stricken with sad forebodings by the appearance of a comet, which he viewed as portending direful disasters to Zurich, and as announcing his own death!

Our author says nothing of all this, which the historians of Switzerland all agree in relating: but in justice to him we must say, that his history does not come down to this period. Perhaps in one of his forthcoming volumes, he may undertake to enlighten us on this subject, and to dilate on his favorite apostle's skill in augury, as well as on his apostolic spirit on the battle field. He, however, furnishes us with a little incident which marks the warlike spirit of the Swiss reformer. "In Zurich itself," he says, "a few worthless persons, instigated to mischief by foreign agency, made an attack on Zuingle in the middle of the night, throwing stones at his house, breaking the windows, and calling aloud for the 'red-haired Uli, the vulture of Glavis'—so that Zuingle started from his sleep, and caught up his sword. The action is characteristic of the man."*

Zuingle was at Zurich what Luther was at Wittemberg. Each claimed the precedency in the career of the reformation. Mr. Hallam thus notices their respective claims: "it has been disputed between the advocates of these leaders to which the priority in the race of reform belongs. Zuingle himself declares that in 1516, before he had heard of Luther, he began to preach the Gospel at Zurich, and to warn the people against relying upon human authority. But that is rather ambiguous, and hardly enough to substantiate his claim. . . . . Like Luther, he

* Vol. iii, p. 275.

had the support of the temporal magistrates, the council of Zurich. Upon the whole, they proceeded so nearly with equal steps, and were so connected with each other, that it seems difficult to award either any honor of precedence."*

We shall have occasion hereafter to refer at some length to the bitter controversy, which raged between these two boasted apostles. They taught contradictory doctrines: one warmly defended, the other as warmly denied the real presence. Were they both guided by the spirit of God? Can the Holy Spirit inspire contradictory systems of belief? If God was with Luther, he certainly was not with Zuingle; and *vice versa.*

By the way, what a pity it is that M. D'Aubigné, while lauding the Swiss reformer to the skies, could not settle the important *previous* question which had so sadly puzzled Zuingle—whether the spirit which appeared to him in his sleep, and suggested the text of Scripture by which he might disprove the real presence, was *black* or *white?* How gently he touches on this passage in the history of Zuingle! He merely gives vent to his surprise by a note of admiration, that this circumstance should have "given rise to the assertion that the doctrine promulgated by the reformer was delivered to him by the devil!"† Did not the reformer's own account of the vision‡—of which he was certainly the most competent witness—"give rise to the assertion?" And did not his brother reformers openly make the charge?

Zurich was the first city of Switzerland, which was favored with the new Gospel. Our author treats in great detail§ of all the circumstances which attended its introduction; and of the preliminary discussions, commotions

* "History of Literature," *sup. cit.* vol. i, p. 163, 4. He cites Gerdes Histor. Evang. Reform. 1, 103. † III, 272, 3.

‡ "*Ater fuerit an albus nihil memini, somnium enim narro.*"—Ibid.

§ Vol. iii, p. 233, *seqq.*

and riots, which were its harbingers. We will present a few specimens. Leo Juda, one of the precursors of the "Gospel" arrived in Zurich "about the end of 1522, to take the duty of pastor of St. Peter's church." Soon after his arrival, being at church, he rudely interrupted an Augustinian monk while he was preaching. "Reverend father Prior," exclaimed Leo, "listen to me for an instant; and you, my dear fellow citizens, keep your seats—I will speak as becomes a Christian"—and he proceeded to show the unscriptural character of the teaching he had just been listening to. A great disturbance ensued in the church. Instantly several persons angrily attacked "the little priest" from Einsidlen (Zuingle). Zuingle, repairing to the council, presented himself before them, and requested permission to give an account of his doctrine, in presence of the bishop's deputies;—and the council, desiring to terminate the dissensions, convoked a conference for the 29th of January. The news spread rapidly throughout Switzerland."*

After having given a very lengthy account of the conference, which, as might have been anticipated, terminated in nothing, our author thus manifests his joy at the brightening prospects of the "Gospel." "Every thing was moving forward at Zurich; men's minds were becoming more enlightened—their hearts more steadfast. The reformation was gaining strength. Zurich was a fortress, in which the new doctrine had entrenched itself, and from within whose enclosure it was ready to pour itself abroad over the whole confederation."†

Our historian tells us how the "reformation gained strength," and how "the *new* doctrine entrenched itself in the fortress"—to say nothing of the "enlightenment," of which we will treat hereafter. The "enlightened" council of Zurich decided in favor of the reformed doctrines; and resorted to force in order to suppress the an-

* Ibid. p. 239. † Ibid. p. 2[illegible]

cient worship. Only think of a town council, composed of fat aldermen and stupid burgomasters, pronouncing definitively on articles of faith! In reading of their high-handed proceedings, we are forcibly reminded of the wonderful achievements, in a somewhat different *genre*, of the far-famed governors and burgomasters of New-Amsterdam, as fully set forth by the inimitable Knickerbocker! The one is about as grotesque as the other. They of Zurich did not, however, belong to the class of Walter, the Doubter: they were perhaps too fat and stupid to doubt.

Let us see some of the proceedings of this famous board of councilmen at Zurich. "Nor did the council stop here. The relics, which had given occasion to so many superstitions, were honorably interred. And then, *on the further requisition of the three* (reformed) *pastors*, an edict was issued, decreeing that, inasmuch as God alone ought to be honored, the images should be removed from all the churches of the Canton, and their ornaments applied to the relief of the poor. Accordingly twelve counsellors—one for each tribe—the three pastors, and the city architect, with some smiths, carpenters and masons, visited the several churches; and, having first closed the doors, took down the crosses, obliterated the paintings (*the Vandals!*), whitewashed the walls, and carried away the images, to the great joy of the faithful (!) who regarded this proceeding," Bullinger tells us, "as a glorious act of homage to the true God." In some of the country parishes, the ornaments of the churches were committed to the flames, "to the greater honor and glory of God." Soon after this the organs were suppressed, on account of their connection with many "superstitious observances, and a new form of baptism was established from which every thing unscriptural was carefully excluded."* What enlightenment, and taste for music!

* Ibid. p. 257-8.

"The triumph of the reformation," our author continues, "threw a joyful radiance over the last hours of the burgomaster Roush and his colleague. They had lived long enough; and they both died within a few days after the restoration of a purer (!) mode of worship."* And such a triumph!! Before we proceed to show by what means this "purer mode of worship" was established at Zurich, we will give, from our historian, an instance of a scene of riot and conflagration enacted by the "faithful" children of the reformation. It details the proceedings of a party, which went out foraging with the bailiff Wirth.

"The rabble, meanwhile, finding themselves in the neighborhood of the convent of Ittingen, occupied by a community of Carthusians, who were generally believed (*by the 'faithful'*) to have encouraged the bailiff Am-Berg in his tyranny, entered the building and took possession of the refectory. They immediately gave themselves up to excess, and a scene of riot ensued. In vain did Wirth entreat them to quit the place; he was in danger of personal ill-treatment among them. His son Adrian had remained outside of the monastery: John entered it, but shocked by what he beheld within, came out immediately. The inebriated peasants proceeded to pillage the cellars and granaries, to break the furniture to pieces and *to burn the books*."† Again, what enlightenment!

This is M. D'Aubigné's statement of the affair: but the deputies of the Cantons, found the Wirths guilty, and pronounced sentence of death on them. Our author views them as martyrs, and tells us,‡ in great detail, how cruelly they were "mocked," how they were "faithful unto death," and how intrepidly the "father and son" ascended the scaffold! His whole account is truly affecting! The reformation is welcome to such martyrs.

He exclaims: "now at length blood had been spilt—

* Ibid. † Ibid. p. 264-5. ‡ Ibid. p. 266, *seqq.*

innocent blood. Switzerland and the reformation were baptized with the blood of the martyrs. The great enemy of the Gospel had effected his purpose; but in effecting it, he had struck a mortal blow at his own power. The death of the Wirths was an appointed means of hastening the triumph of the reformation."* "The reformers of Zurich," he adds, "had abstained from abolishing the Mass when they suppressed the use of images; but the moment for doing so seems now to have arrived."†

He thus relates the manner in which the Mass was suppressed, and the "purer worship" introduced in its place. "On the 11th of August, 1525, the three pastors of Zurich, accompanied by Megander, and Oswald and Myconius, presented themselves before the great council, and demanded the re-establishment of the Lord's Supper. Their discourse was a weighty one, and was listened to with the deepest attention—every one felt how important was the decision which the council was called upon to pronounce. The Mass—that mysterious rite which for three (*fifteen*) successive centuries had constituted the animating principle in the worship of the Latin Church (*and in all churches*)—was now to be abrogated—the corporeal presence of Christ was to be declared an illusion, and of that illusion the minds of the people were to be dispossessed; some courage was needed for such a resolution as this, and there were individuals in the council who shuddered at so audacious a design."‡

The grave board of councilmen did not however hesitate long: they made quick work in this most important matter. "The great council was convinced by his (Zuingle's) reasoning, and hesitated no longer." (How could they resist his reasoning, based as it was, on the teaching of the spirit, *black* or *white?*) "The evangelical doctrine had sunk deep into every heart, and moreover, since the separation from Rome had taken place, there was a kind

* Ibid. p. 270. † Ibid. p. 271. ‡ Ibid.

of satisfaction felt in making that separation as complete as possible, and digging a gulph, (the reformation *was* a gulph) as it were, between the reformation and her. The council decreed that the Mass should be abolished, and it was determined that on the following day, which was Maunday Thursday, the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in conformity with the apostolic model."* This was indeed quick and sweeping work!

"The altars disappeared," he continues; "some plain tables, covered with the sacramental bread and wine, occupied their places, and a crowd of eager communicants was gathered around them. There was something exceedingly *solemn* in that assemblage."† No doubt it was much more solemn than had been the Catholic worship! Our author thus describes the "solemnity." "The people then fell on their knees: the bread was carried round on large wooden dishes or platters, and every one broke off a morsel for himself; the wine was distributed in wooden drinking cups; the resemblance to the primitive supper was thought to be the closer. (!) The hearts of those who celebrated this ordinance were affected with alternate emotions of wonder and joy."‡ Truly there was much to excite both wonder and joy! This whole description seems to be in the mock heroic style of writing.

In the same strain is the following passage: "Such was the progress of the reformation at Zurich. The simple commemoration of our Lord's death caused a fresh overflow "in the church of love to God, and love to the brethren. . . . Zuingle rejoiced at these affecting manifestations of grace, and returned thanks to God that the Lord's Supper was again working those miracles of charity, which had long since ceased to be displayed in connexion with the Sacrifice of the Mass (!) 'Our city,' said he, 'continues at peace. There is no fraud, no dissension, no envy, no wrangling among us. Where shall we

* Ibid. p. 272. † Ibid. p. 273. ‡ Ibid.

discover the cause of this agreement except in the Lord's good pleasure, and the harmlessness and meekness of the doctrine we profess?'" M. D'Aubigné however spoils this beautiful picture, by the following cruel sentence, which immediately follows: "charity and unity were there—but not uniformity."*

To establish this, he refers to certain strange doctrines broached by Zuingle, this same year, 1525, in his famous "Commentary on true and false religions," addressed to Francis I, king of France. He labors hard to defend the reformer from the charge of Pelagianism, which his associates in the reformation did not fail to make. But was it honest in him to conceal the notorious fact, that, in this same "Commentary," Zuingle had placed Theseus, Hercules, Numa, Scipio, Cato, and other heathen worthies, in heaven among the elect? This was something worse than Pelagianism—it was downright paganism. Could "charity and unity" reign in the midst of the fiercest wranglings, of the most bitter civil feuds and dissensions, and amidst the bloodshed of a protracted civil war? Yet these were the scenes amid which the Swiss reformation revelled!

"Such," then, "was the progress of the reformation at Zurich!" In other places—at Berne and at Basle—its proceedings were marked by similar demonstrations. It was every where the same. Every where, it invoked the civil power, and was established, as at Zurich, by the decisions of boards of councilmen, and was enforced by violence. M. D'Aubigné alleges facts which prove all this; and we deem it unnecessary to repeat them. It would be but telling over the same story.

Œcolampadius was the chief actor on the reformation stage at Basle. He was a learned and moderate man, the early friend of Erasmus, and, in some respects, the counterpart of Melancthon. The Gospel-light seems to have

* Ibid. p. 274.

first beamed upon him from the eye of a beautiful young lady, whom, in violation of his solemn vows plighted to heaven, he espoused; "probably," as Erasmus wittily remarked, "to mortify himself!" In the race of matrimony, at least, he could claim the precedency over his brother reformers. Yet they did not long remain behind. Matrimony was, in all cases, the *dénouement* of the drama which signalized the zeal for reformation. Zuingle himself, "the priest of Einsidlin," espoused a rich widow. A widow also caught Calvin, a little later. Martin Bucer, another reformer, who figured chiefly in Switzerland, far outstripped any of his fellows in the hymeneal career. He became the husband of no less than three ladies in succession: and one of them had been already married three times—all too, by a singular run of good luck, in the reformation line!!*

It is really curious to observe, how M. D'Aubigné treats this subject. Speaking of the Swiss reformers, he says: "Several among them at this period (1522) returned to the "apostolic usage† (!!!). Xyloclect was already a husband. Zuingle also married about this time. Among the women of Zurich, none was more respected than Anna Reinhardt, widow of Meyer von Knonau, mother of Gerold. From Zuingle's coming among them, she had been constant in her attendance on his ministry; she lived near him, and he had remarked her piety, modesty, and maternal tenderness. Young Gerold, who had become almost like a son to him, contributed farther to bring about an intimacy with his mother. The trials that had already befallen this Christian woman—whose fate it was to be

* For a full account of this matter, see "Travels of an Irish gentleman," ch. xlvi, where the great Irish poet enters into the subject at length; giving his authorities as he proceeds, and playing off his caustic wit on the hymeneal propensities of the reformers.

† How very absurd! Was St. Paul married? Were any of the apostles ever married, except St. Peter, of whose wife the Scripture says nothing after he became an apostle? She was probably dead.

one day more severely tried than any woman whose history is on record—had formed her to a seriousness which gave prominency to her Christian virtues. She was then about thirty-five, and her whole fortune consisted of four hundred florins.* It was on her that Zuingle (*kind, sympathetic soul*) fixed his eyes for a companion for life."†

Still he had his misgivings at breaking his solemn vows: he "did not make his marriage public. This was beyond doubt a blameable weakness in one who was in other respects so resolute (*reckless?*). The light he and his friends possessed on the subject of celibacy was by no means general. The weak might have been stumbled."‡ This last is a new phrase, introduced, we suppose, to unfold a *new* idea—that the people retained conscience longer than the boasted reformers, who misled them from "the old paths."

On this same subject, M. D'Aubigné treats us to some fine touches of romance—his *forte*—about nuns who embraced the reformation, and then immediately, as a necessary sequel, got married. We will give a few instances:

"At Köningsfeld upon the river Aar, near the castle of Hapsburg, stood a monastery adorned with all the magnificence of the middle ages, and in which reposed the ashes of many of that illustrious house which had so often given an emperor to Germany. To this place the noble families of Switzerland and of Suabia used to send their daughters to take the veil. . . . . The liberty enjoyed in this convent . . . . . had favored the introduction not only of the Bible *(they had it already, and were obliged to read portions of it daily by their rule)*, but the writings of Luther and Zuingle; and soon a new spring of life and joy changed the aspect of its interior!"§

A "new spring of life and of joy" was certainly thus opened to the nuns. They soon became tired of retire-

* A very large sum at that time. † Vol. ii, p. 383. ‡ Ibid. p. 384.
§ Vol. iii, p. 280, 281.

ment and of prayer: they sighed for the flesh-pots of Egypt to which they had bidden adieu—for the "life and joy" of the world. Margaret Watteville, one of them, wrote a letter* to Zuingle, full of piety and of *affection;* and declared that she expressed not "her own feelings only, but those of all the convent of Königsfeld who loved the Gospel."

M. D'Aubigné tells us, that a "convent into which the light of the Gospel had penetrated with such power, could not long continue to adhere to monastic observances. Margaret Watteville and her sisters, persuaded that they should better serve God in their families than in the cloister, solicited permission to leave it."† The council of Berne heard their prayer: the convent "gates were opened; and a short time afterwards, Catharine Bonnsteten (*one of the nuns*) married William Von Diesbach."‡ The nun Margaret Watteville was equally fortunate: she "was about the same time united to Lucius Tscharner of Coira."§ Such was invariably the *dénouement* of the reformation plot.

Our historian, in fact, views the sacrilegious marriages of the priests and nuns—against their solemn vows freely plighted to God at his holy altar—as the most conclusive proof of the progress of the reformation! Mark this curious passage: "But it was in vain to attempt to smother the reformation at Berne. It made progress on all sides. The nuns of the convent D'Ile had not forgotten Haller's visit. (This was a wretched apostate, who had held improper discourse in the convent, which drew upon him a sentence of perpetual banishment from the 'lesser council' of Berne; which sentence was however mitigated by the 'grand council,' which was content with merely rebuking him and his associate reformers, and ordering them to confine themselves in future to their own business and

* Given in full, *Ibid.* p. 281, 282. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.
§ Ibid. p. 285.

let the convents alone).* 'Clara May, (one of the nuns) and many of her friends, pressed in their consciences (!) what to do, wrote to the learned Henry Bullinger. In answer, he said: 'St. Paul enjoins young women not to take on them vows, but to marry, instead of living in idleness under a false show of piety. (1 Tim. v. 13, 14). Follow Jesus in humility, charity, patience, purity, and kindness.' Clara, looking to heaven for guidance, resolved to act on the advice, and renounce a manner of life at variance with the word of God (*and her own inclinations*) —of man's invention—and beset with snares. Her grandfather Bartholomew, who had served for fifty years in the field and council hall, heard with joy of the resolution she had formed. Clara quitted the convent,"† and married the provost, Nicholas Watteville.‡

What an evidence of piety—"looking to heaven for guidance"—it is—to get married! And what a perversion of Scripture was that by Henry Bullinger, to induce those to marry, who had taken solemn vows of devoting themselves wholly to God in a life of chastity! As this is a pretty good specimen of the manner in which the reformers "wrested the Scriptures to their own perdition,"§ we will give entire the quotation of St. Paul to Timothy, referred to by the "learned Bullinger," including the two previous verses, which he found it convenient not to quote, probably because they would have convicted him of the most glaring perversion of God's holy word.

1 Timothy, chap. v, verse 11. "But the younger widows shun: for when they have grown wanton in Christ, they *will marry;* (this advice the reformers took special care not to follow).

Verse 12. "*Having damnation, because they have made void their first faith,* (by violating their vows to God).

V. 13. "And withal, being idle, they learn to go about

* Such at least is the statement of M. D'Aubigné—iii, p. 279.
† Ibid. p. 284. ‡ Ibid. p. 285. § 2 Peter, iii, 16.

from house to house (as the escaped nuns did at the time of the reformation): not only idle, but talkers also, and inquisitive, speaking things which they ought not."

V. 14. "I will, therefore, that the younger (who had not taken vows) should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil."

This passage of St. Paul speaks for itself, and needs no commentary. While the reformers were quoting St. Paul, to induce the nuns to escape from their convents and to get married, why did they not also refer to the following texts:

"But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: it is good for them so to continue, even as I."*

"Art thou bound to a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? *Seek not a wife.*"†

"But I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided."‡

And why did they conceal the following texts, which had special reference to the nuns who, "having grown wanton in Christ, *would* marry, having damnation, because they had made void their first faith?"

"And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married, thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Therefore, both he who giveth his virgin in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not, doeth better."§

Alas! the carnal minded reformers understood little of this sublime perfection! They could not appreciate it. They were satisfied with "doing well;" nor did they even

* I Corinth. vii, 8. † Ibid. v. 27. ‡ Ibid. vv. 32, 33.
§ Ibid. vv. 34, 38.

come up to this standard, any farther, at least, than to get married! Their case is explained by St. Paul, in the same epistle from which the above texts are extracted. "But the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God: for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand: because it is spiritually examined."*

We shall here close our remarks on the reformation in Switzerland, which, as we have, we hope, sufficiently shown, pandered to the worst passions, created disturbance and civil commotions wherever it appeared, revelled in war and bloodshed, and was finally established by the strong arm of the civil power. We shall hereafter devote a separate chapter to the Calvinistic branch of the reformation established at Geneva.

* 1 Corinth. ii, 14.

CHAPTER VI.

REACTION OF CATHOLICITY, AND DECLINE OF PROTESTANTISM.

Two parallel developments—The brave old ship—Modern Protestantism quite powerless—A "thorough godly reformation" needed—Qualities for a reformer—The three days' battle—The puzzle—A thing doomed—Which gained the victory?—The French revolution—Ranké and Hallam—The rush of waters stayed—Persecution *en passant*—Protestant spice—The council of Trent—Revival of piety—The Jesuits—Leading causes and practical results—Decline of Protestantism—Apt comparison—What stemmed the current?—Thread of Ariadne—Divine Providence—Reaction of Catholicity—Casaubon and Grotius—Why they were not converted—Ancient and modern Puseyism—Justus Lipsius and Cassander—The inference—Splendid passage of Macauley—Catholicity and enlightenment—The church indestructible—General gravitation to Rome—The circle and its centre.

No feature in the whole history of the reformation is perhaps more remarkable than that which is presented by the speedy decline of Protestantism, on the one hand, and the no less rapid reaction of Catholicity on the other. A rapid glance at the history of these two great developments of the two systems of religion will throw much additional light on their respective characters, and will serve to explain to us yet more fully what we have been endeavoring to elucidate thus far—the character, causes, and manner of the reformation. It is a divine maxim to judge the tree by its fruits: and we propose, in the present chapter, to make a general application of this rule; reserving, however, more special details on the subject to those which will follow.

The reformation swept over the world like a violent storm: and it left as many ruins in its course. It threatened to overturn every thing, and to carry all before it. So rapid was its work of destruction, that its admirers—

those "who moved in the whirlwind"—confidently predicted the speedy downfall of the old religion, and the triumphant establishment of the new *ones* on its ruins. Even many of those who remained steadfast in the ancient faith, though firmly relying on the solemn promises of Christ, yet trembled not a little for the safety of the church. Jesus seemed to be asleep while the tempest was raging on the sea of the world; and his disciples, who were in the good old ship of the church tossed on the waves, like their prototypes of the Gospel, "came to him, and awaked him, saying: 'Lord, save us, we perish.' And Jesus said to them: 'Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?' Then rising up, he commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm."*

Such was precisely the phenomenon presented by the history of the church in the sixteenth century. Soon the storm of the reformation had spent its fury, and settled down into a "great calm"—the calm of indifferentism and infidelity on the lately troubled sea of Protestantism; and of peace and security on the broad ocean of Catholicism. When men's minds had had time to recover from the excitement produced by the first movements of the reformation, they were enabled to estimate more justly the motives and causes of that revolution. The result was, that many enlightened protestants returned to the bosom of the Catholic church; while others plunged into the vortex of infidelity. Thus Catholicity, far from being extinguished, powerfully reacted.

Like the sturdy oak of the forest, which, instead of being thrown down by the storm, vanquishes its fury, and even sends its roots farther into the earth in consequence of the agitation so also the tree of the church, planted by Christ and watered with his blood and that of his martyrs, successfully resisted the violence of the storm of Protestantism, and became, in consequence of it, more

* St. Matth. viii, 24—26.

firmly and solidly fixed in the soil of the world—more strongly "rooted and founded in charity."*

Nothing is more certain in history, than this two-fold development. Even M. D'Aubigné, surely an unexceptionable witness, admits its entire truth, however he may seek to disguise it by the thin mantle of sophistry.† Speaking of the decline of modern Protestantism, he employs this emphatic language. "But modern Protestantism, like old Catholicism (!), is, in itself, a thing from which nothing can be hoped—a thing quite powerless. Something very different is necessary to restore to men of our day the energy which saves."‡ So that, the experiment of Protestantism, notwithstanding all the noise it has made in the world, and all its loud boasting about destroying superstition and enlightening mankind, has yet turned out a complete failure, even according to the explicit avowal of its most unscrupulous advocate!! It has been "enlightening and saving" the world for full three hundred years; and in the end it has lost itself, and become "a thing quite powerless, from which nothing can be hoped!"

A new reformation is necessary to *reform* the old one, and to impart to it "the energy which saves." M. D'Aubigné, we presume, is to be the father of this new "thorough-godly" reformation! We wish him joy of his new apostleship, and hope he may succeed better than his predecessors. He has, we humbly think, all the qualities requisite for a reformer, according to the type of the sixteenth century, viz. a smattering of learning,—a sanctimonious air, in which he greatly excels some of his predecessors—a skill in sophistry, which has the admirable *simplicity* of not being always even specious—and, to crown all, an utter recklessness of truth.

We will here give a passage from our historian, which

* Ephesians, iii, 17.

† The mantle of his sophistry is always *thin*; and it requires not the gift of *clairvoyance* to see through it. ‡ Vol. i. Preface, p. ix.

has the double merit of exhibiting the gist of his theory on our present subject, and of being a perfect curiosity in its *genre*. M. D'Aubigné's whole work is, however, we may remark, *en passant*, a perfect "cabinet of curiosities" in this way. The passage is found in the third volume of his "History of the Great Reformation." It is an attempt to answer a writer of the Port Royal,* who had compared the struggle of the last three centuries to a battle of three days' duration; and who had accumulated evidence to prove that the infidel philosophers of France, who brought about the French revolution, had but carried out the principles broached by the reformers. Our author "willingly adopts the comparison, but not the part that is allotted to each of these days." He politely declines receiving the well deserved compliment the Frenchman was paying him, with his most gracious bow. Then follows the curious passage.

"No, each of those days had its marked and peculiar characteristic. On the first (the sixteenth century) the word of God triumphed, and Rome was defeated; and philosophy, in the person of Erasmus, shared in the defeat. On the second (the seventeenth century) we admit that Rome, her authority, her discipline, and her doctrine, are again seen on the point of obtaining the victory, through the intrigues of a far-famed society (the Jesuits), and the power of the scaffold, aided by certain leaders of eminent character, and others of lofty genius. The third day, (the eighteenth century) human philosophy arises in all its pride, and finding the battle-field occupied, not by the Gospel, but by Rome, it quickly storms every entrenchment, and gains an easy conquest. The first day's battle was for God, the second for the priest, and the third for reason—what shall the fourth be?"†

Aye, that's the puzzle! He piously hopes that it will be for "the triumph of him to whom triumph belongs,"‡

* Port Royal, par Sainte Beuve, vol. i, p. 20. † Vol. iii, p. 304. ‡ Ib.

that is, for his own new system of reformation, which is to be but the "reappearance" of the old. But this is manifestly hoping against all hope; for modern Protestantism, he confesses, is "a powerless *thing*." It has settled down into an almost mortal lethargy, in all those countries where it was first established, and where the progress of enlightenment has laid bare to the world its endless vagaries and ever growing inconsistencies—its hopeless powerlessness. Its tendency is necessarily downward; it bears in its own bosom the seeds of death; it *must* share the fate of all other mere human institutions, and *must* afford another verification of our blessed Saviour's prophetic declaration: "every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."* No human eloquence or effort can prevent it from abiding this doom, the seal of which is already, in fact, branded on its forehead, M. D'Aubigné himself being witness! And had he been silent, "the stones would have cried out"—to pronounce this fate!

It is needless for us to dwell long in the examination of his theory about the "three days' battle." The triumph which he ascribes to the reformation on the first day was not real—it was scarcely even apparent. Notwithstanding the premature shouts of victory by the reformed party, the old church still retained a vast ascendency in point of numbers, of extension, and also, as we shall prove in the sequel, of intelligence. In compensation for her losses on the battle field of Europe, she gained great accessions to her numbers in the East Indies, in Asia, and in the new world, which her navigators had discovered, and her missionaries converted. When a portion of Europe spurned her voice, she "turned to the Gentiles," and waved the banner of her cross in triumph over new worlds. She certainly then gained the advantage, even in the "first day's battle."

In the second, she was avowedly in the ascendant. During it, she, to a great extent, retrieved her losses in

* St. Matth. xv, 13.

Europe itself. Of course, all the talk about "the intrigues of a far-famed society and the power of the scaffold," is mere palaver. We shall soon prove it to be little better, on unquestionable Protestant authority. As to the scaffold, we hope to show hereafter,* by a mass of evidence which cannot be answered, that it was much oftener erected by those who raised the clamor for the emancipation of thought, than by those who continued to abide in the old church.

In the third day's battle, Catholicity again triumphed. The French revolution was, in fact, but the "reappearance" of the "great reformation," in another and more terrific shape. The French infidels made as much noise about liberty of thought, and inveighed as fiercely against the corruptions of the Catholic church, as had been done by the reformers two and a half centuries before. The former did little more than catch up the Babel-like sounds of the latter, and re-echo them in a voice of thunder throughout Europe. But this mere human thunder was drowned by the divine thunder of the vatican! Rome conquered the daughter, as she had erewhile conquered the mother. If she alone "occupied the battle field," it was because the Protestants had retired from it—had ingloriously fled, and left Christianity to its fate, in this, its fiercest struggle with infidelity! Did Protestants win *one* laurel in that battle field? Can they count *one* martyr who fell a victim in that bloody effort to put down Christianity? The Catholic clergy were massacred in hundreds; they poured out their blood like water, for the defence of religion. Did the French infidels attack Protestants? If they did not—and they certainly did not—then how are we to explain this phenomenon, but on the principle of a sympathetic feeling? Men seldom go to battle against their friends and allies.

To show the rapid decline of Protestantism, after the

* In chapter x. "On Religious Liberty."

first fifty years of its violent existence; and to unfold the parallel reaction of Catholicism, we had intended to present a rapid analysis of what a famous living Protestant writer of Germany—Leopold Ranké—has abundantly proved on the subject, in his late "History of the Papacy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."* But Henry Hallam, another eminent living Protestant writer of great research and authority, has anticipated us in our labor. In his History of Literature, already quoted, he follows Ranké, and presents every thing of consequence, bearing on our present subject, which the eminent German historian had more fully exhibited, as the result of much patient labor and research. Mr. Hallam also adds many things of his own. His work has thus greatly abridged our labor, and we shall do little more than cull from its pages, and put into order what may serve to elucidate the matter in hand. We presume that no impartial man will question our authorities.

The decline of Protestantism, and the reaction of Catholicism were intimately connected: they went hand in hand. The same causes that explain the one, will in a great measure account for the other; with perhaps this exception, that Protestantism, like all other mere human institutions, carried within its own bosom an intrinsic principle of dissolution; whereas Catholicity, on the other hand, had within itself strongly developed the principle of vitality and of permanency. These two opposite features were, in fact, distinctive of the two systems.

According to Mr. Hallam, Protestantism began to decline, and Catholicity to gain ground, shortly after the middle of the sixteenth century. The immediate disciples of the reformers, after the death of the latter, soon lost the fierce and warlike spirit manifested by those who had first reared the banner of revolt against Rome. The

* "Histoire de la Papauté pendant les xvi et xvii siécles." Traduite de l'Allemand par M. J. B. Haiber. 4 vols. 8vo. A Paris, 1838.

enthusiasm of the first onslaught speedily died away, and the principle of hatred which had originated the reformation, was gradually weakened. A counter principle of love—the very essence of Christianity and of God himself—gradually gained the ascendant in the bosom of those who, in a moment of fierce excitement, had been estranged from the Catholic church. The consequence was that vast bodies of Protestants re-entered its pale.

Both Ranké and Hallam bear evidence to the truth of these remarks. The latter says: "This prodigious increase of the Protestant party in Europe after the middle of the century (xvi) did not continue more than a few years. It was checked and fell back, not quite so rapidly or completely as it came on, but so as to leave the antagonist church in perfect security." After a tedious apology for entering on this subject in a history of literature, he proposes "to dwell a little on the leading causes of this retrograde movement of Protestantism; a fact," he continues, "as deserving of explanation as the previous excitement of the reformation itself, though from its more negative character, it has not drawn so much of the attention of mankind. Those who behold the outbreaking of great revolutions in civil society or in religion, will not easily believe that the rush of waters can be stayed in its course; that a pause of indifference may come on, perhaps very suddenly, or a reaction bring back nearly the same prejudices and passions (!) as those which men had renounced. Yet this has occurred not very rarely in the annals of mankind, and never on a larger scale than in the history of the reformation!"*

He then proceeds to assign some of the leading causes which, according to his view, "stayed the rush of waters" of the revolution, called by courtesy the reformation. After speaking of the stern policy of Philip II of Spain, and assigning undue prominence to the inquisition, "which

* "History of Literature," &c. *sup. cit.* vol. i, p. 272, ? 6.

soon extirpated the remains of heresy in Italy and Spain" —into which countries Protestantism never penetrated, at least to any extent, and therefore could not be "extirpated"—he next alludes to the civil wars in France between the Huguenots and the Catholics, and then comes down to Germany. "But in Bavaria Albert V, with whom, about 1564, this reaction began, in the Austrian dominions, Rodolph II, in Poland Sigismund III, by shutting up churches, and by discountenancing in all respects their Protestant subjects, contrived to change a party once powerful, into an oppressed sect."*

We hate persecution, no matter what is made the pretext for its exercise; but every candid man must allow that, in resorting to these measures of severity, the German princes did but repay their "Protestant subjects" in their own coin. If they took from them their churches, it must be borne in mind that those same churches were erected by Catholics to whom they rightfully belonged, and that, in the first effervescence of the reformation they had been seized on violently by the Protestant party. They did but take back by law what had been wrested from the rightful owners by lawless violence, and what would not have been otherwise surrendered. If "they discountenanced their Protestant subjects," it was only after a long and bitter experience of the troubles they had caused, of the riots and conflagrations they had brought about in the abused name of religion, and of the utter fruitlessness of conciliatory measures.

Besides, had not the German Protestant princes proceeded with still greater harshness against their Catholic subjects, whose only crime was their calm and inoffensive adherence to the religion of their fathers? The account was certainly more than balanced, as we shall show more fully hereafter.† These are at least extenuating circumstances, which a man of Mr. Hallam's moderate principles

* Ibid. p. 273, ? 7. † Chapter x.

should not have wholly concealed. But, we presume, he deemed it *expedient* to add a little Protestant spice in order to season for the palate of his English Protestant readers, the otherwise insipid viands of admissions in favor of Catholicity, which he was serving up for them.

One leading cause of the reaction of Catholicity, according to him, was the promulgation and general adoption of the decrees of the council of Trent. "The decrees of the council of Trent were received by the spiritual princes of the empire (German) in 1566; 'and from this moment,' says the excellent historian who has thrown most light on this subject, 'began a new life for the Catholic church in Germany.'"* We heartily concur in the truth of this remark. Divine Providence, which draws good out of evil, wisely brought about the council of Trent, and watched over its long protracted and often interrupted labors till they were brought to a happy termination. This was the only legal, as well as the only adequate remedy to the evils of the church in the sixteenth century. The Tridentine canons and decrees for reformation, exercised a powerful influence throughout christendom. Faith was every where settled on an immoveable basis, local abuses disappeared, and piety revived. The reformation was the indirect cause of all this good; and in this point of view, if in few others, it deserves our gratitude.

The revival of piety, through the influence of the Tridentine council, is thus attested by Mr. Hallam. "The reaction could not, however, have been effected by any efforts of the princes against so preponderating a majority as the Protestant churches had obtained, if the principles that originally actuated them had retained their animating influence, or had not been opposed by more efficacious resistance. Every method was adopted to revive an attachment to the ancient religion, insuperable by the love of novelty, or the power of argument (!). A stricter disci-

* Ranké, ii, p. 46. Hallam, ibid.

pline and subordination were introduced among the clergy: they were early trained in seminaries, apart from the sentiments and habits, the vices and virtues (!) of the world. The monastic orders resumed their "rigid observances."*

"But, far above all the rest, the Jesuits were the instruments for regaining France and Germany to the church they served. And we are more closely concerned with them here, that they are in this age among the links between religious opinion and literature. We have seen in the last chapter with what spirit they took the lead in polite letters and classical style; with what dexterity they made the brightest spirits of the rising generation, which the church had once dreaded and checked *(more spice)*, her most willing and effective instruments. The whole course of liberal studies, however deeply grounded in erudition, or embellished by eloquence, took one direction, one perpetual aim—the propagation of the Catholic faith.† . . . . They knew how to clear their reasoning from scholastic pedantry and tedious quotation for the simple and sincere understandings which they addressed; yet, in the proper field of controversial theology, they wanted nothing of sophistical (!) expertness or of erudition. The weak points of Protestantism they attacked with embarrassing ingenuity; and the reformed churches did not cease to give them abundant advantages by inconsistency, extravagance, and passion."‡

"At the death of Ignatius Loyola," he continues, "in 1556, the order he had founded was divided into thirteen provinces besides the Roman; most of which were in the Spanish peninsula, or its colonies. Ten colleges belonged to Castile, eight to Aragon, and five to Andalusia. Spain was for some time the fruitful mother of the disciples, as she had been of the master. The Jesuits who came to Germany were called 'Spanish priests.' They took pos-

* Ibid. § 8. † Ibid. § 9.

‡ Ibid. § 10, where he cites Hospinian, Ranké, and Tiraboschi, the first a declared enemy of the Jesuits.

session of the universities: 'they conquered us,' says Ranké, 'on our own ground, in our own homes, and stripped us of a part of our own country.' This, the acute historian proceeds to say, sprung certainly from the want of understanding among the Protestant theologians, and of sufficient enlargement of mind to tolerate unessential differences. The violent opposition among each other, left a way open to these cunning strangers, who taught a doctrine not open to dispute."*

He then proceeds to treat of the practical results brought about by these causes. These were a rapid declension of Protestantism, and a correspondent increase of Catholicism. "Protestantism, so late as 1578, might be deemed preponderant in all the Austrian dominions, except the Tyrol.† In the Polish diets, the dissidents, as they were called, met their opponents with vigor and success. The ecclesiastical principalities were full of Protestants; and even in the chapters some of them might be found. But the contention was unequal, from the different character of the parties; religious zeal and devotion (!), which fifty years before had overthrown the ancient rites in northern Germany, were now more invigorating sentiments in those who secured them from farther innovation. In religious struggles, where there is any thing like an equality of forces, the question soon comes to be which party will make the greatest sacrifice for its own faith. And while the Catholic self-devotion had grown far stronger, there was much more of secular cupidity, lukewarmness, and formality in the Lutheran church. In very few years, the effects of this were distinctly visible. The Protestants of the Catholic principalities went back into the bosom of Rome. In the bishoprick of Wartzburg alone, sixty-two thousand converts are said to have been received in the year 1586."‡

"The reaction," he continues a little afterwards, "was

* Ibid. p. 274, § 11. † Ranké, ii, p. 78. ‡ Ranké, ii, p. 121.

not less conspicuous in other countries. It is asserted 'that the Huguenots had already lost more than two-thirds of their number in 1580;'* comparatively, I presume, with twenty years before. And the change in their relative position is manifest from all the histories of this period. . . . . At the close of this period of fifty years (A.D. 1600), the mischief done to the old church in its first decennium (from 1550 to 1560) was very nearly repaired; the proportions of the two religions in Germany coincided with those which had existed at the pacification of Passau. The Jesuits, however, had begun to encroach a little on the proper domain of the Lutheran church; besides private conversions, which, *on account of the rigor of the laws*, not certainly less intolerant than in their own communion, could not be very prominent; they had sometimes hopes of the Protestant princes, and had once, in 1578, obtained the promise of John, king of Sweden, to embrace openly the Romish (!) faith, as he had already done in secret to Passevin, an emissary (!) despatched by the pope on this important errand. But the symptoms of an opposition, very formidable in a country which has never allowed its kings to trifle with it (*except at the time of the reformation*), made this wavering monarch retrace his steps. His successor, Sigismund, went farther, and fell a victim to his zeal, by being expelled from his kingdom."† Here was Protestant toleration!

"This great reaction of the papal (!) religion," he proceeds, "after the shock it had sustained in the first part of the sixteenth century, ought for ever to restrain that temerity of prediction so frequent in our ears. As women sometimes believe the fashion of last year in dress to be wholly ridiculous, and incapable of being ever again adopted by any one solicitous for her beauty,‡ so those who affect to pronounce on future events are equally con-

* Ranké, ii, p. 147.

† Hallam, ibid. p. 275, § 14.

‡ A very apposite comparison, truly, to illustrate the new religious fashions!

fident against the possibility of a resurrection of opinions which the majority have for the time ceased to maintain. In the year 1560, every Protestant in Europe doubtless anticipated the overthrow of popery (!); the Catholics could have found little else to warrant hope than their trust in heaven. The late rush of many nations towards democratical opinions has not been so rapid and so general as the change of religion about that period. It is important and interesting to inquire what stemmed this current. We readily acknowledge the prudence, firmness, and unity of purpose that, for the most part, distinguished the court of Rome, the obedience of its hierarchy, the severity of intolerant laws, and the searching rigor of the inquisition (*more spice*); the resolute adherence of the great princes of the Catholic faith, the influence of the Jesuits over education: but these either existed before, or would, at least, not have been sufficient to withstand an overwhelming force of opinion.

"*It must be acknowledged that there was a principle of vitality in that religion* independent of its external strength. By the side of its secular pomp, its relaxation of morality (!), there had always been an intense flame of zeal and devotion. Superstition it might be in the many, fanaticism in a few; but both of these imply the qualities which, while they subsist, render a religion indestructible. That revival of an ardent zeal through which the Franciscans had in the thirteenth century, with some good, and much more evil effect (!), spread a popular enthusiasm over Europe, was once more displayed in counteraction of those new doctrines, that themselves had drawn their life from a similar development of moral emotion."*

Coming from the source it does, this is truly a valuable avowal. After all the talk, then, about the "downfall of popery"—after all the loud boasting and high pretensions

* Ibid. p. 275, 276, § 15.

of Protestantism—the experiment of three hundred years is beginning to convince all reasonable men of what they should have known before—that the Catholic religion "has a principle of vitality in her," and that she is "indestructible." It could not be otherwise: Christ himself had pledged his solemn word that "the gates of hell should not prevail against his church, built on a rock:"* and this simple promise solves the whole mystery which so sadly puzzled Ranké and Hallam. It is the thread of Ariadne, which would have conducted them with security from the tortuous windings of the labyrinth of history. It would have explained to them, among other things, why it is that in all the great emergencies of the church, God has raised up, as instruments to do his high behests, men and institutions just such as the exigency of the times demanded. Thus, for instance, the Franciscans and Dominicans (why did Mr. Hallam omit the latter?) in the thirteenth century, and the Jesuits and St. Charles Borromeo, to pass over many more illustrious names, in the sixteenth, St. Athanasius in the fourth century, St. Cyril, St. Leo, St. Chrysostom, and St. Augustine in the fifth, St. Gregory the Great in the end of the sixth, St. Gregory VII in the eleventh, St. Bernard in the twelfth, St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth, and many others in various other ages, all are examples of this providence of God watching over the safety of his church, "the pillar and ground of the truth."†

The reaction in favor of the Catholic church continued with redoubled force in the seventeenth century. "The progress of the latter church" (the Catholic), says Mr. Hallam, "for the first thirty years of the present (seventeenth) century, was as striking and uninterrupted as it had been in the final period of the sixteenth. Victory crowned its banners on every side. . . . The nobility, both in France and Germany, who in the last age had

* St. Matth. xvi, 18. † 1 Timoth. iii, 15.

been the first to embrace a new faith, became afterwards the first to desert it. Many also of the learned and able Protestants gave evidence of the jeopardy of that cause by their conversion. It is not just, however, to infer that they were merely influenced by this apprehension. Two other causes mainly operated: one, to which we have already alluded, the authority given to the traditions of the church, recorded by the writers called fathers, and with which it was found difficult to reconcile all the Protestant creed (*any of it*); another, the intolerance of the reformed churches, both Lutheran and Calvinistic, which gave as little latitude (*less*) as that which they had quitted."*

"The defections," he continues, "from whatever cause, are numerous in the seventeenth century. But two, more eminent than any who actually renounced the Protestant religion, must be owned to have given evident signs of wavering, Casaubon and Grotius. The proofs of this are not founded merely on anecdotes which might be disputed, but on their own language.† Casaubon was staggered by the study of the fathers, in which (*whom*) he discovered many things, especially as to the eucharist, which he could not in any manner reconcile with the tenets of the French Huguenots. Perron used to assail him with arguments he could not parry. If we may believe this cardinal, he was on the point of declaring publicly his conversion, before he accepted the invitation of James I to England: and even while in England, he promoted the Catholic cause more than the world was aware." After a feeble endeavor to impair the validity of this statement of Perron, he adds: "Yet if Casaubon, as he had much inclination to do, being on ill terms with some in Eng-

* Vol. ii, p. 30, § 11.

† In a very lengthy and learned note, he here accumulates evidence from the writings and correspondence of Casaubon, in support of the statement made in the text. He also speaks at length of the labors of the learned Cardinal Perron.

land, and disliking the country, had returned to France, it seems probable that he would not long have continued in what, according to the principles he had adopted, would appear a schismatical communion."*

"Grotius," he says, "was, from the time of his turning his attention to theology, almost as much influenced as Casaubon by primitive authority, and began, even in 1614, to commend the Anglican church for the respect it showed, very unlike the rest of the reformed, to that standard.† But the ill usage he sustained at the hands of those who boasted their independence of papal tyranny (!); the caresses of the Gallican clergy after he had fixed his residence at Paris;‡ the growing dissensions and virulence of the Protestants; the choice that seemed alone to be left in their communion between a fanatical anarchy, disintegrating every thing like a church on the one hand, and a domination of bigoted and vulgar ecclesiastics on the other; made him gradually less and less averse to the comprehensive and majestic unity of the Catholic hierarchy, and more and more willing to concede some point of uncertain doctrine, or some form of ambiguous expression. This is abundantly perceived, and has been often pointed out, in his Annotations on the Consult-

* Ibid.

† Truly, as the wisest of men has said, there is nothing new under the sun. Grotius, Casaubon, and many other learned Protestants, more than two hundred years ago, seem to have taken the identical ground now occupied by the Puseyites in England. This will appear from a perusal of the copious notes of Hallam on their writings. (Ibid.) Speaking of the effort of Grotius to extract from the council of Trent a meaning favorable to his own semi-catholic views, he says: "his aim was to search for subtle interpretations, by which he might profess to believe the words of the church, though conscious that his sense was not that of the imposers. It is needless to say that this is not very ingenuous," &c. Perhaps the history of Grotius and Casaubon may serve to throw some additional light on the end and aim of the Puseyte controversy.

‡ It is remarkable that Grotius, persecuted by brother Protestants in Holland, found a peaceful shelter from the storm in Catholic France!

ation of Cassander, written in 1641; in his Animadversions on Rivet, who had censured the former treatise as inclining to popery; in the Votum pro Pace Ecclesiasticâ, and in the Rivetiani Apologetici Discussio; all which are collected in the fourth volume of the theological works of Grotius. These treatises display a uniform and progressive tendency to defend the church of Rome in every thing that can be reckoned essential to her creed; and in fact he will be found to go farther in this direction than Cassander."*

But, alas! neither Casaubon nor Grotius ever penetrated beyond the threshold of the temple of Catholicity. Though they seem to have had light enough to know and to love the truth, yet were they not worthy of the gift of faith, which is granted to those only who become "as little children" for Christ's sake. We have already seen by what circumstances the former was prevented from entering the Catholic pale. Of the latter Hallam says: "Upon a dispassionate examination of all these testimonies, we can hardly deem it an uncertain question whether Grotius, if his life had been prolonged, would have taken the easy leap which still remained; and there is some positive evidence of his design to do so. But, dying on a journey, and in a Protestant country, this avowed declaration (in favor of Catholicity) was never made."†

It is dangerous to tamper with the proffered grace of heaven, or to put off conversion! The learned Lipsius went farther; he was faithful to grace, and "took the easy (*not so easy*) leap" into the Catholic church. Mr. Hallam tells us that he spent the latter years of his life "in defending legendary miracles, and in waging war against the honored (!) dead of the reformation!"‡ This

* Ibid. p. 32—35, § 13. Cassander was a Catholic theologian, who was commissioned by the emperor Ferdinand to write a work to conciliate the Protestant party. Many think that, in executing this task, he had, through the best motives no doubt, conceded too much. He died in 1566, aged 53 years. † Ibid. p. 35, § 16. ‡ Ibid.

was of course intended as an evidence of his Protestant orthodoxy, and as a *douceur* to English bigotry. This unworthy virulence, however, but enhances the more the value of his previous admissions in favor of Catholicity, which could have been wrung from him only by the sternest evidence of facts. Justus Lipsius was a prodigy of classical learning and erudition. He became a most exemplary Catholic, and died at Louvain in 1606.

We have now completed our rapid analysis of the facts connected with the decline of Protestantism on the one hand, and the reaction of Catholicity on the other. We have shown, on unquestionable Protestant authority, the existence and extent of both these parallel developments. Every candid man will easily draw the natural inference from these facts: that Protestantism was a human, and Catholicity a divine institution. We can explain the facts on no other principle. To attempt to explain them on the principles of mere human philosophy is a miserable fallacy. If Protestantism was true, it would have conquered and endured; if Catholicity was false, it must have fallen.

We will close our remarks on this subject by a splendid avowal of another living Protestant writer of great eminence—Thomas Babington Macauley—whose testimony, though already often quoted, is too apposite to the matter in hand to be here omitted. The passage which we will quote is taken from an article in the Edinburg Review on Ranké's History of the Papacy, another circumstance which entitles it to a place in this chapter.

"There is not, and there never was, on this earth, a work so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon; and when cameleopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses

are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Roman pontiffs. This line we trace back, in an unbroken series, from the pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin, the august dynasty extends until its origin is lost in the twilight of fable! (*Was the apostolic age "the twilight of fable?"*) The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the papacy remains. The papacy remains, not in decay, nor a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic church is still sending forth, to the furthest ends of the world, missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. *The number of her children is greater than in any former age.* Her acquisitions in the new world have more than compensated her for what she has lost in the old. Her spiritual ascendency extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which, a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions,* and it will be difficult to show that all the other Christian sects united amount to one hundred and twenty millions.†

* The number of Catholics in the world has been variously stated. An official statistical account, lately published in Rome, makes the number 160,842,424. Malte Brun estimates it at above 164,000,000; and others have stated it at 180 or even 200,000,000. The Roman statement is perhaps the most to be relied on. It does not at least exceed; it may even fall below the mark, in consequence of the probable incompleteness of the returns.

† This embraces the Greek and oriental churches, and is still doubtless excessive. The total number of Protestants, including free-thinkers, &c., is not probably over 50,000,000.

Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments, and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon set foot on Briton—before the Frank had passed the Rhine—when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch—when idols were still worshipped in the Temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor, when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's!"

Truly splendid testimony to the vitality of the Catholic church, coming, as it does, from the pen of a sworn enemy—of a Scotchman and a Presbyterian! Speaking of the trite remark that, as the world becomes more enlightened, it will renounce Catholicity and embrace Protestantism, he says: "Yet we see that, during these 250 years Protestantism has made no conquests worth speaking of. Nay, we believe, that as far as there has been a change, that change has been in favor of the church of Rome. We cannot therefore feel confident that the progress of knowledge will necessarily be fatal to a system, which has, to say the least, stood its ground in spite of the immense progress which knowledge has made since the days of Queen Elizabeth." He a little after adds: "four times since the authority of the church of Rome was established in western christendom, has the human intellect risen up against her. Twice she remained completely victorious. Twice she came forth from the conflict bearing the marks of cruel wounds, but with the principle of life still strong within her. When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish!"

Yes—it *must* be avowed: the Catholic church is indestructible, and therefore divine! You might as well try to

blot out the sun from the heavens, as to extinguish the bright light of the Catholic church on earth! Clouds may hide for a time the sun's disc from the eye of the beholder—but the sun is still there, the same as when he shone with his most brilliant light upon us: so also, the clouds of persecution and prejudice may cover for a time the fair face of the church—but the eye of faith penetrates those dark clouds, and assures us, that though partially concealed, she is still there! And when those clouds clear away, she again shines out with a more brilliant and a more cheering light than ever! He who said: "heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away," has also pronounced that "the gates of hell shall *not* prevail against her."

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in modern society, is the general and manifest reaction of Catholicity throughout the world, and especially in Protestant countries. There seems to be a universal gravitation of all spirits towards Rome!* Germany, the first theatre of the reformation, led the way in this awakening. Besides the works of Voight, Hurter and Ranké, which are well known, there are also: the "Universal History" and the "Journeys of the Popes," by the great Protestant historian John Müller—the "History of the Princes of the house of Hohenstaufen," by the famous Raumur—the "History of the Church," and "the History of Italy," by M. Leo—not to mention a host of other works by eminent German Protestant writers of the day—all of which evidence, by their spirit and their justice to the popes and to the old religion, this wonderful resuscitation of Catholic feeling in Protestant Germany. England, Scotland, and the United States even, have participated in this movement. We trust that De Maistre's prophetic remark—that when sectarianism should have run

* See the "Introduction to Ranké's Papauté" by M. Alexandre de Saint Chéron, page xv, seqq.

through the whole circle of error, it would return again to the great Catholic centre of truth—is on the eve of its fulfilment!

What we will now proceed to prove in relation to the manifold influences of the reformation, will throw additional light upon the matter we have treated in this chapter; and may serve also greatly to explain why it was that, after a brief storm of excitement, Catholicity reacted and Protestantism declined.

Part III.

INFLUENCE

OF THE

REFORMATION ON RELIGION.

CHAPTER VII.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON DOCTRINAL BELIEF.

"Who would ever have believed that the reformation from the beginning would have attacked morality, dogma, and faith; or that the seditious genius of a monk could have caused so much disturbance?" Erasm. (*Epist Georgio Duci*).

> "As long as words a different sense will bear,
> And each may be his own interpreter,
> Our airy faith will no foundation find,
> The word's a weathercock for every wind."—DRYDEN.

The nature of religion—A golden chain—Question stated—Private judgment—Church authority—As many religions as heads—M. D'Aubigné's theory—Its poetic beauty—Fever of logomachy—"Sons of liberty"—The Bible dissected—A hydra-headed monster—Erasmus—Curing a lame horse—Luther puzzled—His plaint—His inconsistency—Missions and miracles—Zuingle's inconsistency—Strange fanaticism—Storck, Münger, Karlstadt, and John of Leyden—A new deluge—Retorting the argument—Discussion at the "Black Boar"—Luther and the cobbler—Discussion at Marburg—Luther's avowal—Breaking necks—Melancthon's lament—The inference—Protestantism the mother of infidelity—Picture of modern Protestantism in Germany by Schlegel.

RELIGION is a divinely established system, which came down from heaven to conduct man thither. By the disobedience of Adam, man, originally created upright, fell from grace, and was, as it were, loosed from heaven to which he had been previously bound by the most sacred

ties of fellowship. Religion is a golden chain reaching down from heaven to earth, which, according to the etymological import of the term, *binds* man *again* to heaven. And to pursue the illustration a little farther, as the loss of even one link would destroy the integrity of a chain, and would render it useless as a means of binding together distant objects; so also, the removal of one link from the chain of religion, would destroy its integrity and mar its lofty purpose. These links are united together in three divisions, comprising severally the doctrines revealed by and through Jesus Christ; the moral precepts which he gave; and the sacraments and sacrifice which he instituted. All these are as essentially and as intimately connected together, as are the parts of a chain. "He that offendeth in one, is guilty of all:"* because he rebels against the authority from which the whole emanates.

Religion then consists of three parts: doctrines to be believed, commandments to be observed, and sacramental and sacrificial ordinances to be received and complied with. The third department partakes of the nature of the other two: being partly doctrinal and partly moral. In other words, the Christian religion embraces, as essential to its very nature and divine purposes, doctrines, morals, and worship: and we propose briefly to examine the influence of the pretended reformation on each of these separately. Was this influence beneficial? Did it really reform religion, as it purported to do? M. D'Aubigné tells us: that "the reform saved religion, and with it society."† We shall see hereafter what it did for society; and we will now inquire whether it "saved religion?"

And first, what was its influence on the doctrines of Christianity? Did it teach them in greater purity, and integrity, or with greater certainty, than the Catholic church had done? Did it shed on them a clearer or more steady light? Or did it, on the contrary, give out a very

* St. James ii, 10. † Vol. i, p. 67.

doubtful and uncertain light; leaving the minds of men in perplexity as to the doctrines to be believed; and permitting its disciples "to be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine,"* on the stormy sea of conflicting human opinions? We shall see. It will not, however, be necessary to our inquiry, to examine the grounds which establish the truth of the various Catholic, or the falsity of the Protestant doctrines in controversy: all that will be requisite for our purpose, will be an investigation of the facts bearing on the question.

The great distinctive feature of the reformation, was its rejection of church authority, and its assertion of the principle of private judgment in matters of religion. This is the key of that new system: this the proudest boast of those who affected to bring about the "emancipation of the human mind." This is the cardinal principle of "Christian liberty," as asserted by Martin Luther, in a special work on the subject: this the means of being rescued from the degrading "captivity of Babylon."† The Catholic religion had taught that, in matters of controversy, Christians were bound by the solemn command of Christ, "to hear the church."‡ Church authority was the *ultima ratio* of controversy, the great means of attaining to certainty in what we are to believe and to reject—the bond of union among Christians. Not that the church meant to decide on every controverted point: she only decided where she found sufficient warrant in revelation to guide her with certainty. In other matters—and they were numerous—she wisely abstained from any definition, and allowed her children a reasonable latitude of opinion, provided however they did not either directly or indirectly infringe on the principles of faith. This was hallowed and consecrated ground, which was not to be trodden by

* Ephes. iv, 14.

† See the two works of Luther "De Christianâ Libertate," and "De Captivitate Babylonicâ

‡ Matth. xviii, 17.

the rude foot of controversy. She said to the stormy billows of human opinion: "thus far shall you come, and no farther: and here shall you break your boiling waves!"*

When the reformers cast off this yoke of church authority, and said "they would not serve" any longer, they had no alternative left, but to decide, each one for himself, what was the doctrine of Christ. Private judgment was thus substituted for the teaching of the church: human opinion for faith. As men were differently constituted, they naturally took different views of the religion of Christ. Each one struck out a new system for himself: and soon, instead of the one religion which had been received with reverence for ages, the world beheld the novel spectacle of almost as many religions as there were heads among the Protestant party!

M. D'Aubigné's theory on this subject is as curious as it is *liberal*, in the modern sense of this term. He thus discourses on the diversities of the reformation: "We are about to contemplate the diversities, or, as they have been since called, the *variations* of the reformation. These diversities are among its most essential characters. Unity in diversity, and diversity in unity, is a law of nature, and also of the church. Truth may be compared to the light of the sun. The light comes from heaven colorless, and ever the same: and yet it takes different hues on earth, varying according to the objects on which it falls. Thus different formularies may sometimes express the same Christian truth, viewed under different aspects. How dull would be this visible creation, if all its boundless variety of shape and color were to give place to an unbroken uniformity!"†

* Job xxxviii, 12. "Huc usque venies et non amplius; et hic confringes tumentes fluctus tuos."

† Vol. iii, p. 235, in the introduction to the eleventh book, in which he treats of the controversies between the partisans of Zuingle and Luther.

A beautiful theory truly, and aptly illustrated! So, then, "the different formularies" of Luther, openly asserting the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, and of Zuingle flatly denying this presence, "both express the same Christian truth viewed under different aspects!" These great champions of Protestantism, as we have seen, mutually anathematized and denounced each other as children of Satan, on this very ground, and yet, in sooth, they maintained "the same Christian truth under different aspects!" They plainly contradicted each other on many other important points, and the Wittemberg doctor would consent to hold no communion with him of Zurich;* and yet they maintained "the same Christian truth!" Luther said to Zuingle, who proposed mutual communion, at the close of the famous conference of Marburg, in 1528, "No, no: cursed be the alliance which endangers the truth of God and the salvation of souls. Away with you: you are possessed by a different spirit from ours. But take care: before three years the anger of God will fall on you!"† And yet M. D'Aubigné would have us believe that they agreed as to the substance of "Christian truth!" Verily, he must think others as credulous as he himself *seems* to be!

And then, the charming illustration from the light of the sun! It is almost a pity to spoil its poetical beauty; though even a poet would lay himself open to the severest criticism, were his figures no more appropriate or true to nature. M. D'Aubigné has taken more than even a poetic license. Does the light of the sun, no matter how diversified, reflect contradictory images "of the objects on which it falls?" Is it so very uncertain, as to leave us in doubt, as to the shape and color of external objects? Does it make us the dupes of constant optical illusions? The light which

* In the conference of Marburg. Cf. Audin, "Life of Luther," p. 415, 416.

† Audin, ibid. See also Luther's Ep. ad Jacobum, præp. Bremens.

the reformers professed to borrow from heaven did all this. And then, does it fall much short of blasphemy to maintain that God is indifferent as to whether we believe truth or error; and that he delights in such a "diversity" of opinions as runs into open contradictions? And this too, when "his well beloved Son" came on earth "to bear testimony to the truth," and laid down his life to seal it with his blood! And when he also pronounced the declaration: "he that believeth not shall be condemned;"* which declaration referred to the necessity of belief "in *all* things whatsoever he had commanded!"†

The doctrine of private judgment broached by the reformers, led to endless inconsistencies and contradictions. It was the prolific parent of sects almost innumerable. More than fifty‡ of these arose before the death of Luther! It was natural that it should be so: "these diversities were among the most essential features of the reformation."§ The tree was only bearing its natural fruits; and the latter, according to the divine standard, are the best criterion whereby to judge of the former: "by their fruits ye shall know them." "The reformation, which promised to put an end to the reign of disputatious theology, had, on the contrary, awakened in all minds a fondness for dispute, bordering on fanaticism: it was the fever of logomachy. Half a century before, men indeed disputed; but then the doctrine of the church was not called into question: now however it was attacked on all sides. In each university, and even in every private house, Germany saw a pulpit erected for whoever pretended to have received the understanding of the divine word."‖ This fever has continued to rage in the bosom of Protestantism even to the present day: it has not abated in the progress of ages. True, in Germany, and on the continent of Europe,

* St. Mark, xvi, 16. † The parallel passage in St. Matth. xxviii, 20.
‡ See Audin, p. 331. § D'Aubigné *ut supra*.
‖ Audin, ibid. p. 190, 191.

it has cooled down into a state of mortal apathy, a more dangerous symptom far than the malady which it has superseded: but elsewhere, it has left the patient in the same restless condition, as erewhile.

Most of the reformers found in the Bible, that a priest who had made a solemn vow of celibacy to God, might and even ought to break it, by taking a wife. The first who made this consoling discovery, were Bernard of Felkirk, abbot of Remberg, and the aged Karlstadt, archdeacon of Wittemberg. Their discovery was hailed with delight by the lovers of "Christian liberty" throughout Germany. Some went still farther, and maintained, Bible in hand, with Bucer, Capito, Karlstadt and other evangelists, that marriage was not indissoluble; and that a Christian could dismiss his wife, or even retain her, and take one or more others at the same time, after the example of the ancient patriarchs. These styled themselves "the sons of liberty"—they should have said *libertinism*.

We shall see, a little later, to what frightful consequences these doctrines led! "All the hallucinations of a disordered intellect were for a time ascribed to the Holy Ghost. Never had the divine wisdom communicated itself more liberally to the human mind! The Bible was laid open as an anatomical subject on an operator's table, and every doctor came with his lance in hand—as afterwards did Dumoulin—to anatomize the word of God, and to seek the spirit, which before Luther had escaped the eye of Catholicism. It was an epoch of glosses and commentaries, which time has not had the trouble of destroying, for they abounded with absurdity, and fell beneath the weight of ridicule which crushed them at their birth. There were new lights, who came to announce that they had discovered an irresistible argument against the mass, purgatory, and prayers to the saints. This was simply to deny the immortality of the soul."* This startling im-

* Audin, p. 192.

iety was really maintained in full school at Geneva, by ertain "new lights," who came from Wittemberg.*

From the earliest period of its history, "the hydra of he reformation had a hundred heads. The anabaptists elieved with Münzer, that without a second baptism, nan could not be saved. The Karlstadtians preached up olygamy. The Zuinglians rejected the real presence. Osiander taught that God had predestined only the elect. The Majorists taught that works were not necessary for alvation; while the followers of Flaccus accused the Majorists of popery. The Synergists preached up man's iberty. The Ubiquitarians believed, that the humanity f Christ was, like his divinity, omnipresent. Some held riginal sin to be the nature, the substance, the essence of nan; while others regarded it as a mere mode of his eing. All these sects boasted of the Bible, as a suffi- ient rule of faith; they published confessions, composed reeds, and insisted on faith, as a condition of communion. Children of the same father, whom they had severally de- ied, they cursed and proscribed each other: they gave he name of heretic to, and shut the gates of heaven against, ll their brethren in revolt, who happened to differ from hem."† Other fanatics preached up the community of oods, with Stork and the Anabaptists; others, with the rophets of Alstell, "the demolition of images, of churches, f chapels, and the adoration of the Lord on high places;"‡ nd others, the inutility of the law, and of prayer. The everish spirit of innovation knew no rest; every day rought forth a new sect. And is it not so, even in our wn age and country?

Erasmus hit off, in his own polished and caustic style, ie extravagant inconsistencies of the Protestant rule of

* "Quidquid de animarum habetur immortalitate, ab antichristo ad atuendam suam culinam excogitatum est." Prateolus—Elench. voce thei, p. 72. See also Bayle's Dictionary, art. Luther.

† Audin, p. 208, 209. See the authorities he quotes, ibid. *note.*

‡ Idem, p. 331.

faith. "They say: 'do philosophy and learning aid us in understanding the holy books?' I reply: 'will ignorance assist you?' They say: 'of what authority are these councils, in which not perhaps a single member received the Holy Ghost?' I ask in reply: 'is not the gift of God, probably, as rare in your conventicles?' The apostles would not have been believed, had they not proved the truth of their doctrines by miracles. Among you every individual must be believed on his own word. When the apostles lulled the serpents, healed the infirm, and raised the dead to life, people were forced to believe in them, though they announced incomprehensible mysteries. Among these doctors, who tell us so many wonderful things, is there one who has been able *to cure a lame horse?* . . . . Give me miracles. 'They are unnecessary: there have been enough of them: the bright light of the Scriptures is not so very clear, since I see so many men wander in the dark. Although we had the spirit of God, how can we be certain that we have the knowledge of his word? What must I believe, when I see, in the midst of contradictory doctrines, all lay claim to dogmatical infallibility, and rise up with oracular authority against the doctrines of those who have preceded us? Is it then likely that during thirteen centuries, God should not have raised up, among the many holy personages he has given to his church, a single one to whom he revealed his doctrine?"*

Luther was often saddened by the defection of his own disciples, as well as grievously puzzled, when they played off on him the same arguments which he had used against the pope. His cherished disciple Mathesius relates the mental anguish he endured, when, being at the castle of the Wartberg in 1521, he heard of the revolt and strange doings of Karlstadt at Wittemberg. He yielded to dejection; he seemed to himself to have been abandoned by God and by men: "his head grew weary, his forehead

* "De Libero Arbitrio." Diatribe. and Menzel, i, 140.

burned with the excitement of his mind, his eye grew dim—and he would open his window" to inhale the breezes of heaven, to cool his fevered soul—then he would again struggle "to forget the world and his wrongs!"* But all his efforts to quiet his own mind proved ineffectual: he chafed like a tiger in his cage. At length he resolved, against the advice of his friends, to leave the Wartburg, and to show himself in the midst of his recreant disciples at Wittemberg. He harangued them for full two hours on the wickedness of their defection from his standard; and concluded his burning invective with the following memorable sentence: "Yes, if the devil himself had entreated me"—to remove the images from the church by violence—"I would have turned a deaf ear to him!"†

He draws a graphic sketch of his own perplexity in a letter to the Christians of Antwerp, written in 1525. We will furnish a few extracts. "The devil has got among you: he daily sends me visiters to knock at my door. One will not hear of baptism; another rejects the sacrament of the eucharist; a third teaches that a new world will be created by God before the day of judgment; another, that Christ is not God: in short, one this, another that. There are almost as many creeds as individuals. There is no booby, who, when he dreams, does not believe himself visited by God, and who does not claim the gift of prophecy. I am often visited by these men who claim to be favored by visions, of which they all know more than I do, and which they undertake to teach me. I would be glad they were what they profess to be."

"No later than yesterday one came to me: 'sir, I am sent by God who created heaven and earth;' and then he began to preach as a veritable idiot, that it was the order of God that I should read the books of Moses for him. 'Ah! where did you find this commandment of God?' 'In the Gospel of St. John?' After he had spoken much, I

* Mathesius. In Vitâ Lutheri, apud Audin, p. 209.
† See the harangue in Audin, p. 237, 238.

said to him: 'friend, come back to-morrow, for I cannot read for you, at one sitting, the books of Moses.' 'Good-bye, master; the heavenly Father, who shed his blood for us, will show us the right way through his son Jesus. Amen!' . . . . *While the papacy lasted there were no such divisions or dissensions:* the strong man peaceably ruled the minds of men; but now one stronger is come, who has vanquished and put him to flight, and the former one storms and wishes not to depart. A spirit of confusion is thus among you, which tempts you, and seeks to withdraw you from the true path." He concludes this strange epistle with these characteristic words: "begone, ye cohort of devils—marked with the character of error: God is a spirit of peace and not of dissension."*

But Luther could not succeed in exorcising the demons, whom his own principle of private judgment had evoked from the abyss. True, he occasionally made trial of the good old Catholic specifics for this purpose; but they proved powerless in his hands. Thus, when pressed by the Anabaptists, to prove infant baptism from the Scriptures—his only rule of faith—he had recourse to the good old Catholic argument of church authority founded on tradition. He appealed to the testimony of St. Augustine and to the teaching of the church during his day. "But, it is objected," he says, "what if Augustine and those whom you call and believe to be the church, erred in this particular? But this objection can be easily impugned. If you do not admit the right, *(jus)* at least will you not admit the fact *(factum)* of this having been the belief of the church? And to deny that this was the faith of the true and lawful church, I deem most impious."†

* "Ein Briefe D. Martin Luther an die Christen zu Antorf." Wittemberg, 1525, 4to. "Doct. M. Luther Briefe," tom. iii, p. 60.

† "Objicitur vero: quid si Augustinus, et quos ecclesiam vocas vel esse credis, in hac parte errârint? . . . . At eadem objectio facile impugnabitur. Si non jus, tamen factum proprie credendi in ecclesia? Hanc autem confessionem negare esse ecclesiæ illius veræ et legitimæ, arbitror impiissimum esse." Epist. Melancthoni, 13 January, 1522.

Another argument he employed to refute the Anabaptists, was that drawn from the necessity of a lawful mission o preach the Gospel, and of miracles to confirm it, when t was not derived through the ordinary channels of the hurch. In a sermon delivered at Wittemberg against heir "prophets," in 1522, he used this language: "Do ou wish to found a new church? Let us see: who has ent you? From whom have you received your mission? As you give testimony of yourselves, we are not at once o believe you, but according to the advice of St. John, we ust try you. God has sent no one into this world who as not called by man, or announced by signs—not even xcepting his own Son. The prophets derived their title rom the law, and from the prophetic order, as we do rom men. I do not care for you, if you have only a mere evelation to propose: God would not permit Samuel to peak, except by the authority of hell (!). When the law s to be changed, miracles are necessary. Where are our miracles? What the Jews said to the Lord, we now ay to you: 'master, we wish for a sign.'"*

Luther often used this argument:† and yet, it might ave been retorted with unanswerable force against himelf. And it was retorted by Stübner and Cellarius, two f the Anabaptist prophets, whom he had attacked. The nswer of the Saxon reformer is not recorded:‡ perhaps e had none to give. According to Erasmus, the reformers never succeeded even "in curing a lame horse!" uther himself, somewhat later, acknowledged, that he ad never performed any miracles, except that "he had apped Satan in the face, and struck the papacy in its ore."§ Astonishing miracles truly!

* Apud Audin, p. 238.

† As in lib. iii, c. iv. "Contra Anabaptistas;" and elsewhere.

‡ In his letter to Spalatin, in which he relates his interview with übner and Cellarius, Luther is silent on this retort. Epist. Spalatino, Ap. 1522. Yet the Anabaptist historians relate it. Cf. Audin, p. 239.

§ See Audin, p. 238, *note*, for authority for this feat.

Luther was not alone, in inconsistently appealing to arguments which condemned himself and his own cause. Many of the other principal reformers were driven to the same straits. In order to refute George Blaurock, an Anabaptist enthusiast, Zuingle used the following argument: "If we allow every enthusiast or sophist to diffuse among the people all the foolish fancies of his heated imagination, to assemble together disciples and make a sect, we shall see the church of Christ split up into an infinity of factions, and lose that unity which she has maintained at so great sacrifices. It is necessary then to consult the church, and not to listen to passion or prejudice. The interpretation of Scripture is not the right of individuals, but of the church: she has the keys, and the power of unlocking the treasures of the divine word."*

Blaurock was not satisfied, as might have been expected with this appeal to authority. Bullinger† tells us, that he answered in a loud voice: "Did not you Sacramentarians break with the pope, without consulting the church which you abandoned—and that too, a church which was not of yesterday? Is it not lawful for us to abandon your church which is but a few days old? Cannot we do what you have done?" Zuingle was nonplussed.

We will give a few instances of the strange fanaticism to which this same principle of private judgment naturally led. We might fill a volume with such examples; but our limits will permit only a few.‡ Hear this announcement of Storck in one of his sermons. "Behold, what I announce to you. God has sent his angel to me during the night, to tell me that I shall sit on the same throne as the archangel Gabriel. Let the impious tremble and the just hope. . . . . It is to me, Storck, that heaven has promised the empire of the world. Would you desire to be visited

* Zuinglius. "De Baptismo," p. 72.

† "In Apologiâ Anabaptist," p. 254.

‡ Those who wish to see more are referred to Catrou, *Histoire du Fanatisme*, tom. i; and to Meshovius.

y God? Prepare your hearts to receive the Holy Spirit. Let there be no pulpit whence to announce the word of God: no priests, no preachers, no exterior worship: let your dress be plain; your food bread and salt; and God will descend upon you."

Münzer, another Anabaptist, thus pleaded for the general division of property: "Ye rich of the earth who keep us in bondage, who have plundered us, give us back our liberty and possessions. It is not only as men that we now demand what has been taken from us: we ask it as Christians. In the primitive church, the apostles divided with their brethren in Jesus Christ the money that was laid at their feet. Give us back the goods you unjustly retain. Unhappy flock of Jesus Christ, how long will you groan in oppression under the yoke of the priest and the magistrate?" "And then the prophet suddenly fell into an epileptic fit: his hair stood erect; perspiration rolled down his face, and foam issued from his mouth. The people cried out: 'silence, God visits his prophet!'"*

At the termination of his ecstacy, which continued for some minutes, the prophet cried out at the top of his stentorian voice: "Eternal God, pour into my soul the treasures of thy justice, otherwise I shall renounce thee and thy prophets."† A Lutheran having appealed to the Bible. "The Bible? Babel!" cried Münzer.‡

What will be thought of this strange conceit of Karlstadt? "One day, Karlstadt was seen running through the streets of Wittemberg with the Bible in his hand, and stopping the passers-by to inquire of them the meaning of difficult passages of the sacred books: 'What are you about,' said the Austin friars to him. 'Is it not written'—answered the archdeacon—'that the voice of truth shall be heard from the lips of infants? I only accomplish the orders of heaven.'"§ Who has not heard of the revolt-

* Audin, p. 231. † Meshovius, p. 4. Catrou, sup cit.
‡ Ibid. § Ibid

ing obscenities of John of Leyden, and of the prophets of Munster? All perpetrated too under the bright new light of the reformation! Who, in fine, that has even glanced at the history of this period, has not remarked the endless extravagances, the absurd conceits, the astonishing fanaticism which marked almost every day of its annals!

Truly, then "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the flood-gates of heaven were opened;"* and a new deluge flooded the earth, more destructive than that which had buoyed up Noah's ark! For this destroyed only the bodies of men; that carried away and ruined men's souls. "The flood-gates of heaven"—did we say? No, the origin of those waters must be sought elsewhere. Luther himself aids us in detecting their source. We have seen above, his opinion on the subject, in his letter to the Christians of Antwerp. And in his subsequent controversies with the Sacramentarians, after having spoken of their dissensions among themselves, he said: "this is a great proof that these *Sacramento-magists* come not from God, but from the devil."† And we have seen how Zuinglius retorted the compliment on Luther and his reformation.

Cannot we turn this, and all the other arguments employed by the several reformers to refute each other, against all of them? Cannot we point to the numberless dissensions of Protestants among themselves—dissensions perpetuated a hundred fold unto this day—to prove against them all, that their pretended reformation, which always produced such fruits, is not from that God, "who is not the God of dissension, but of peace?" Cannot we ask them, whence they had their mission to reform the church? And if they answer, "from heaven;" ask them again to prove it to us by miracles? How will they—how *can* they answer these arguments, which they themselves so often wielded against one another.

* Genesis vi, 11.

† "An die Christen zu Reutlingen," 5 January, 1526.

To illustrate this matter still farther, and to show what
irit originated and perpetuated the dissensions with
hich early Protestantism was torn into fragments, we
ill here exhibit a few specimens of the manner in which
ntroversies among the reformers were then conduct-
. In 1524, Luther went to Jena, where he preached
gainst the "prophets" of the Anabaptists, whose argu-
ents had been answered by their brother Protestants
ith the *convincing* weapons of fire and sword! Tens of
ousands of the vast multitudes, whom these fanatics had
isled, had been butchered; but yet their spirit was not
holly subdued. Karlstadt, then pastor at Jena, feeling
mself aggrieved by the violence of Luther's sermon,
allenged him to an oral discussion. The challenge was
cepted, and the tavern of the "Black Boar," was the
ace appointed for the meeting. After some preliminary
scussion, in which the two "new apostles" indulged in
sulting personalities—Karlstadt maintaining that Luther
d meant *him* in his sermon, and Luther calling on him
proof, telling him "if he saw the likeness in the pic-
re, it must have suited him," &c.—the discussion pro-
eded after this wise:

Karlstadt. "Well then, I will dispute in public, and I
ll manifest the truth of God, or my own confusion.

Luther. Your own folly rather, Doctor.

Karlstadt. My confusion, which I shall bear for God's
ry.

Luther. And which will fall back on your own shoul-
s. I care little for your menaces. Who fears you?

Karlstadt. Whom do I fear? My doctrine is pure; it
nes from God.

Luther. If it comes from God, why have you not im-
ted to others the spirit that made you break the images
Wittemberg?

Karlstadt. I was not the only one concerned in that
erprise. It was done after a mature decision of the

senate, and by the co-operation of some of your disciple
who fled in the moment of peril.

Luther. False, I protest.

Karlstadt. True, I protest."

Karlstadt complained a little after, that Luther ha
condemned him at Wittemberg without previous adm
nition. This Luther flatly contradicted, stating that "
had brought Philip and Pomeranius into his study," f
that purpose: hereupon Karlstadt became enraged, a
exclaimed: "if you speak the truth, may the d—il te
me in pieces!" The discussion ended in nothing—
most discussions of the kind do. Luther challenged Kar
stadt to write against him; the latter accepted the cha
lenge: Luther then gave him a gold florin as stake-mone
and the compact was duly ratified, after the old-Germa
fashion, by two overflowing bumpers of ale.* Never ha
the Black Boar of Jena been so crowded, or witnessed
spectacle of such stirring interest! And such a spectacl

From Jena Luther proceeded to Orlamunde, where
carried on a spirited controversy, in the presence of t
town council, with a cobbler theologian, named Crispi
who had recently learned—thanks to the reformation
how to apply his craft to interpreting, if not *mending* t
Bible! The discussion was long and animated; Crisp
supplying his lack of argument by a stentorian voice, a
by furious gesticulations. The subject was the lawfu
ness of images; Luther defending, and Crispin objectin
and both appealing to the Bible. What was most mor
fying to the reformer, the town council sided with t
cobbler, and decided against the Wittemberg Doctor! "
then," said Luther to the council, "you condemn me
"Most assuredly;" cried out Crispin—"you and
who teach what is opposed to God's word."

"A childish insult," said Luther as he mounted the c
One of the chamberlains here caught hold of his g

* See the whole discussion in Audin, p. 322, seqq.

ents, and said: "before you go away, master, a word ith you on baptism, and the sacrament of the eucharist." Have you not my books?" said the monk to him. "Read em."

"I have read them, and my conscience is not satisfied ith them;" said the chamberlain.

"If any thing displeases you in them write against me;" id Luther: and he started off. Luther himself relates us this adventure, and also gives to us the words of vful malediction with which the people greeted him, when was leaving Orlamunde.*

But the most interesting discussion of all, was that held Marburg in 1528, on the subject of the holy sacrament; tween Luther, Melancthon, Justus Jonas, and Cruciger, the one part; and Zuingle, Œcolampadius, Martin Bur and Gaspard Hedio, on the other. Luther contended r the real presence of the body and blood of Christ along th that of the bread and wine; and Zuinglius mainined a figurative presence, or rather, no presence at all. his point was the greatest subject of contention among e reformers. "In 1527, Luther counted already no ss than eight different interpretations of the text: '*this my body!*' Thirty years afterwards, there were no less an eighty-five!† Rasperger, who wrote at a somewhat ter period, reckoned no less than two hundred!‡ A etty good commentary this, on the principle of private dgment. It must surely be a good rule of faith, since it s thus led to those "diversities," which M. D'Aubigné dmires so much.§

* Opp. tom. i, edit. Jenæ, fol. 467; edit. Witt. i, 214. Cf. Audin, 329.

† See Audin, p. 408, *note*, for an account of the principal interpretaons; most of them singular enough, even for those days of Bible nia.

‡ Apud Lieberman, Theologia Dogmat. De Eucharistia.

§ Bellarmine bears evidence that 200 interpretations of the words:—*is my body*—had been enumerated in a work published in 1577. ntroversiæ vol. iii, cap. viii, de Eucharist. p. 195. Edit. Venetiis, 1—in 6 vols. folio.

One of Zuingle's chief arguments against the real pre sence, was the fact, that this doctrine was held by th Catholic church. Luther answered: "wretched argu ment! Deny then the Scripture also; for we have re ceived it too from the pope. . . . . We must acknowledg that there are great mysteries of faith in the papacy; yea all the truths we have inherited: for it is in popery tha we found the true Scriptures, true baptism, the true sa crament of the altar, the true keys which remit sin, tru preaching, the true catechism, which contains the Lord' prayer, the ten commandments—that is true Chris tianity."*

Precious avowal, coming as it does, from the father o the reformation—the most inveterate enemy of Rome How it contrasts with many of his other declarations Why abandon the Catholic church, if it taught all thi and held "true Christianity?" "Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant!" On another occa sion, Luther had said: "had Karlstadt or any other prove to me, five years ago that there was nothing but bread an wine in the sacrament, he would have rendered me grea service. It would have been a great blow to the papacy but it is all in vain; the text is too plain."† It was per haps too late: he had already taken his stand, and com mitted himself on the question.

The conference on this subject at Marburg, was lon and violent: instead of healing, it only widened the breac among the reformers. We can furnish but one extra from the debate. To prove the figurative presence, Zuin gle had appealed to Ezechiel's wheel, and to the famou text from Exodus, ch. xii: "for it is the phase, that is, th passover of the Lord," which text had been suggested t him by a nocturnal visiter of whom "he could not sa

* Opp. Lutheri, Jenæ, fol. 408, 409.

† Lutheri Opp. edit. Hall. tom. xv, p. 2448. Menzel, i, 269, 270.

hether he was black or white!"* Luther answered: the pasch and the wheel are allegorical. I do not mean o dispute with you about a word. If *is* means *signifies*, appeal to the words of Christ, who says: "this is my ody." The devil cannot get out of them (*Da Kann der Teufel nicht für*). To doubt is to fall from the faith. Why o you not also see a trope in "he ascended into heaven." God made man, the Word made flesh, a God who suffers -these are all incomprehensible things, which you must owever believe under penalty of eternal damnation."

Zuingle. "You do not prove the matter. I will not ermit you to incur the begging of the question. You ust change your note (*Ihr werdet mir anderes singen*). o you think that Christ wished to accommodate himself the ignorant?"

Luther. "Do you then deny it? 'This is a hard say-g,' muttered the Jews, who spoke of the thing as impos-ble. This passage cannot serve you."

Zuingle. "Bah! it breaks your neck" (*Nein Nein, icht euch den Hals ab*).

Luther. "Softly, be not so haughty: you are not in vitzerland, but in Hesse; and necks are not so easily oken here" (*Die Hälse brechen nicht also*).†

The wavering, but often candid Melancthon wept bit-ly over the dissensions of early Protestantism. He had t the power to heal the crying evil, nor the courage to andon the system in which it originated. From many ssages of his writings bearing on the subject, we select following lament, in a confidential letter to a friend. The Elbe with all its waves could not furnish tears ough to weep over the miseries of the distracted refor-tion."‡

* Florimond Remond, and Schlussenburg, in proem. Theolog. Cal-. Zuingle's own words have been already quoted.

† For an account of the entire discussion, taken from Rodolph Collin, eye and ear witness, see Audin, p. 413, seqq.

‡ Epist. lib. ii, Ep. 202.

The inextricable confusion of doctrinal beliefs induced by the principle of private judgment, even during the life of the reformers themselves, reminds us of another entanglement extraordinary, inimitably described by Scott:

> "Now, on my faith, this gear is all entangled,
> Like to the yarn clew of the drowsy knitter,
> Dragged by the frolic kitten through the cabin,
> While the good dame sits nodding o'er the fire:
> Masters attend: 'twill crave some skill to clear it."

The masters "did attend," Melancthon at their head, but they had not the "skill which was craved," to clear the entanglement of the reformation, caused by the "frolic kitten" of private judgment! Nor had they the common prudence to muzzle or to confine the kitten which had done such mischief. In this negligence, they "nodded" more than Scott's "good dame!"

Such then were the "diversities" of early Protestantism! Such its endless maze of inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities! Such the bitter fruits of that tree of revolt which Luther planted in the centre of Germany: and which was watered by the blood of the slaughtered Anabaptists, of the hundred thousand men who fell in the war of the peasants, and of the countless multitudes who perished in the thirty years' war! Such was the influence of the reformation on the doctrines of Christianity: It found but one faith on the earth; and it created a hundred new ones, all contradicting each other! Before it came, mankind were of "one tongue and of one speech;" after it had done its work, there was a confusion of tongues on the earth, and men no longer understood each other. Does not St. Paul draw a lively picture of early—and even of modern Protestantism—when he speaks of those who are like "children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, in which they lie in wait to de-

eive?"* Could a system which thus divided and unsettled faith—which produced all these disastrous results, be pproved by heaven?

Let it not be said, that the reformation did not produce ll these bitter consequences. It is fairly responsible for hem all. No effect ever followed more necessarily or more nmediately, from any cause, than these divisions followed rom their first great, and their only cause—private judgent, as the only rule of faith. This principle is responible for yet more evil results: it has led, by gradual but y certain steps, to infidelity. History does not tell us any who made a profession of infidel principles in hristian countries, during the first fifteen ages of the hurch. And now, what is the state of that portion of the orld, which on the continent of Europe *professes* Proestant Christianity? Infidelity is the order of the day in ermany, and in Switzerland; the two fatherlands of rotestantism. It is unnecessary to multiply proof on a atter so unquestionable. Even M. D'Aubigné himself mits, that the majority of Protestants have passed over the standard of rationalism, or the religion of men"†—*as* to rank deism. And even where Protestantism still bsists, what is it, but a lifeless tree, the withered anches of which are stirred only by the breath of its own ternal dissensions?

We will conclude this chapter with the picture of Protestantism in modern Germany, drawn by the master hand Frederick Von Schlegel, whose mighty mind, disgusted th the endless mazes of Protestantism, sought refuge ithin the pale of Catholic unity. He is speaking of the asted biblical learning of Germany, in which he says he true key of interpretation, which sacred tradition ne can furnish, was irretrievably lost, as the sequel has too well proved!" He then adds: "this is no where fully understood, and so deeply felt, as in Protestant

* Ephesians, iv, 14. † Preface to vol. i, p. 9.

Germany of the present day—Germany, where lies the root of Protestantism, its mighty centre, its all-ruling spirit, and its life-blood—Germany, where, to supply the want of the true spirit of religion, a remedy is sought sometimes in the external forms of liturgy,* sometimes in the pompous apparatus of biblical philology and research destitute of the true key of interpretation; sometimes in the empty philosophy of rationalism, and sometimes in the mazes of a mere interior pietism."†

* He here refers to the ordinances promulgated a few years ago by the king of Prussia, for the reform of the Liturgy (Protestant.)

† Philosophy of History, ii, 207.

CHAPTER VIII.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON MORALS.

"This world is fallen on an easier way;
This age knows better than to fast and pray."—*Dryden.*

Two methods of investigation—Connexion of doctrines and morals—Salutary influence of Catholic doctrines—Of confession—Objections answered—Of celibacy—Its manifold advantages—Utility of the doctrines of satisfaction and indulgences—Of fasting—Of prayers for the dead—Of communion of saints—Sanctity of marriage—Divorces—Influence of Protestant doctrines—Shocking disorders—Bigamy and polygamy—Mohammedanism—Practical results—Testimonies of Luther, Bucer, Calvin and Melancthon—and of Erasmus—Character of Erasmus—John Reuchlin—Present state of morals in Protestant countries.

We have seen what was the influence of the reformation on the doctrines of Christianity. We will now briefly examine its influence on morals. Was this beneficial, or was it injurious? There are two ways to decide this question: the one by reasoning *a priori* on the nature and tendency of the respective doctrines of Catholicism and of Protestantism; the other, which will greatly confirm the conclusions of the former, by facts showing what was the relative practical influence of both systems. We will employ both these methods of investigation.

1. Doctrines have a powerful influence on morals. The former enlighten the understanding, the latter guide and direct the movements of the heart and will. These are of themselves mere blind impulses, until light is reflected on them from the understanding. A sound faith then, illuminating the intellect, is an essential pre-requisite to sound

morals, in the individual, as well as in society. True, w
are able, by the exercise of our free will, to shut our eye
to the light, and to continue acting perversely; but thi
does not disprove the powerful influence, which the un
derstanding enlightened by faith, has over our moral con
duct.

What was the necessary moral influence of those doc
trines of the Catholic church, which the reformation re
jected; and what that of those new ones which it subst
tuted in their place? We speak only, of course, of th
distinctive doctrines of both communions; not of the com
mon ground which they occupy. The reformation re
tained many of the great principles of Christianity, whic
according to the testimony of Luther himself, referred
above, it had borrowed from the Catholic church. Amon
the doctrines, or important points of discipline which th
reformation repudiated, the principal were: confession
the celibacy of the clergy; the doctrine of satisfactio
implied in fasting, purgatory, prayers for the dead, an
indulgences; the honor and invocation of saints; and th
indissoluble sanctity of marriage; to say nothing of th
real presence, which the greater portion of Protestants all
rejected. We will say a few words on the moral infl
ence of each of these doctrines. We may say of them a
in general, that they had a restraining and elevating effec
that many of them were painful to human nature; an
opposed a strong barrier to the passions.

Even Voltaire admitted the salutary moral influence
confession. He says: "The enemies of the Catho
church, who opposed an institution so salutary, seem
have taken away from men the greatest possible check
secret offences."* Another infidel, and mortal enemy
Rome—Marmontel—says: "How salutary a preservati
for the morals of youth, is the practice and obligation

* "Annales de l'Empire, quoted by Robelot, "Influence," &c. p.
note.

ping to confession every month? The shame attending his humble avowal of the most hidden sins, prevents perhaps the commission of more of them, than all other moves the most holy taken together."* Nothing but stern uth could have drawn such avowals from such men.

How many crimes, in fact, has not the practice of confession prevented or corrected! How much implacable tred has it not appeased! How much restitution of illtten goods, and how much reparation of injured character, has it not brought about! How often has it not preerved giddy youth from confirmed habits of secret and grading vice! How much consolation has it not poured to bosoms torn by anguish, or weighed down by sorrow! hat amount of good and salutary advice has it not imrted! How often has it not prevented the sinner from ing driven to the very verge of despair! In a word, w much has it not contributed to the preservation of orals in every portion of society, which felt its influence! Tell us not, that confession may be abused by corrupt en—that it has been often made an instrument of unholy bition in the hands of the priesthood—and that it facilies the commission of crime, by its offer of pardon. ese objections are all based on unfounded suspicion, or oss misapprehension of the nature of confession. At st the evils complained of are greatly exaggerated, and not to be put in comparison with the incalculable ount of good, which this institution is calculated to ect, and which it has really done. What good thing is re, which has not been abused? Has not the Bible lf, abused by wicked men, been a source of incalcula mischief? Has not the church guarded against abuses the confessional, by the sternest enactments? One of se takes from the wicked priest all power of absolving accomplice in crime; and another requires the peni-

* "Mémoires," tom. i, liv. i. Apud Robelot, ibid.

tent to denounce the unfaithful minister to the proper au thorities.*

And then, how sacred and inviolable has not the seal confession ever been? History does not record one sing instance of its violation, among hundreds of thousands priests, in the long lapse of ages!† How can the prie avail himself of the knowledge obtained through confe sion, in order to exercise political or any other undue in fluence, when he is bound by the most sacred obligatio sanctioned by the most severe penalties, to make no us whatever of the knowledge thus acquired? Why reasc from mere suppositions and mere possibilities, again the strongest evidences, and the most stubborn facts history?

As to the other objection—that confession encourag the commission of sin—it is as puerile as it is hackneye Absurdity is stamped on its very face. What? is it easi then to commit a sin which you know you have to confe to a fellow man, than it would be to commit the same si without feeling any such obligation? We would not l guilty of an offence, forsooth, which we believed we coul expiate by a mere act of internal repentance, joined wit confession to God; and yet we would be encouraged t commit this same offence, if we felt that, in addition to a this, we would be obliged to confess it to a priest! Th objection is predicated on a strange ignorance of huma nature. The Catholic church requires, for the remissio of sin, all that Protestants demand, and, over and abov all this, it requires as essential conditions to pardon, man painful things—confession, restitution, works of penite

* See the two bulls of Benedict XIV on this subject. They b gin, *Sacramentum* and *Apostolici*. Another enactment to the sam effect was made by pope Gregory XV, in the year 1622. See Liguori- "*Homo Apostolicus*" Tract. XVI, numo. 95, seqq. and numo. 165, seq De complice et sollicit.

† See the testimony of Marmontel to this effect. *Mémoires*, tom. i

l satisfaction—which Protestants do not require. hich system encourages the commission of sin most ?
The people never could be induced to confess their sins a married clergy. From the testimony of Burkard, hop of Worms, it appears that the Catholic population that city refused to go to confession to those priests, o, stimulated by the principles of the reformation then t commencing, had broken their vows of celibacy by ing wives. Confession and celibacy fell together. A rried clergy never can command the respect, which has r been paid to those who are unmarried. This is gene- ly admitted by Protestants, and even is made a matter censure against the Catholic clergy, who are accused of wing too much influence over their flocks! The true ret of this influence lies in the greater abstraction from world—in the greater freedom from worldly solicitude n the more spiritual character of an unmarried clergy. es not St. Paul allege these very motives, in the strong eal he makes in favor of celibacy, in his first epistle to Corinthians ?* Does he not advise the embracing of s state both by word and example ? Can the Catholic rch be blamed for having adopted his principles, and ed on his advice ?
Who can recount the immense advantages of priestly ibacy to society ? . Who can tell of all the splendid rches it has erected ; of the hospitals for the sick and afflicted, it has reared ; of the colleges it has built; of ignorant it has instructed ; of the noble examples of oic charity it has given to the world ; and of the Pagan ions it has converted to Christianity ? Catholic Europe ull of noble monuments to religion, to literature and to rity, which an unmarried priesthood has built up.
To advert briefly to the last consideration named above ; a married clergy, other things being equal, cope with that is unmarried, in missionary labors among heathen

* Chap. vii. Read the whole chapter.

nations? With the incumbrance of their wives and children, can the former be as free in their movements, be as zealous and disinterested; can they mingle as freely with the people, labor as much, or succeed as well, in any respect, as the latter? What say the annals of Protestant missionary enterprise on this subject? Can they point to *one* single nation or people converted to Christianity by their married preachers, notwithstanding the immense outlay of money for this purpose, and all the parade that is made on the matter? True, there are other weighty causes, which have greatly contributed to this signal failure in Protestant missions; but the want of celibacy in their ministers is no doubt one great reason. Some Protestant missionary societies in the U. States are beginning to feel the truth of this remark.*

The doctrine of satisfaction was another strong Catholic barrier against vice, which the reformation destroyed. The reformers could not appreciate the utility of fasting, of vigils, and of other works of penance, to expiate sin. They had abolished the great sacrifice of the new law; and they wished also to abolish all those painful observances, which could nourish and keep alive in the soul of the Christian that *spirit* of sacrifice, which might incline him "to deny himself, to take up his cross and to follow Christ." Both kinds of sacrifice were intimately connected; and they both fell together. The reformers no longer taught their disciples, after the example of St. Paul, "to chastise their bodies and bring them into subjection," or "to fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in their flesh."†

And yet, besides expiating sin, and rendering Christians more conformable to the image of the Saviour and of St. Paul, this doctrine was fraught with incalculable advantages to society. To expiate their sins, Catholics of the

* We shall treat of this subject in greater detail hereafter.

† Colossians i, 24.

olden time not only "chastised their bodies," but they also bestowed abundant alms, and reared splendid institutions of learning and of charity. Many of the colleges and hospitals of Europe owe their erection to the operation of this principle. It is quite common to find in the testamentary dispositions of their pious founders, this consideration expressed in such clauses as this: "for the expiation of my sins."

We have seen that St. Peter's church and the university of Wittemberg were both indebted for their erection mainly to indulgences, which were predicated on the necessity of satisfaction for sin. These are two instances, out of hundreds which might be stated, to show the beneficial influence of this doctrine on society.* Alas! Charity hath grown cold in those places where this principle hath ceased to exist! Private interest—a fever for speculation—selfish and sordid avarice—have dried up those deep fountains of Catholic charity, which erewhile irrigated and fertilized the earth!

How many are the advantages of fasting! How it elevates the mind,† fosters temperance, and teaches us to restrain the passions, and to subdue the rebellious flesh! "Like another spring," according to the beautiful comparison of St. John Chrysostom,‡ "it renews the spirit, and brings calm and joy to the soul." It also promotes health and conduces to longevity. Who has not remarked the great age to which the anchorites of the desert attained? Malte Brun informs us, that of one hundred and fifty-two anchorites, who lived in different climates, and in different centuries, the average age was seventy-six years.§ By accustoming us to endure privation, fasting teaches us

* See "The Ages of Faith" by Kenelm Digby, which is full of such examples.

† *Vitia comprimit, mentem elevat, virtutem largitur et præmia.*—Præf. ad Missa.

‡ St. John Chrysostom—"De excellentia Jejun." Opp. T. ii.

§ "Précis de la Géographie" ii, 44.

to bear patiently the necessary ills of life, and disposes us for great enterprises. In fact it is remarkable, that Moses and Elias did not approach the Deity to receive his special communications, but after the preliminary disposition of long fasting: and that Christ himself "fasted forty days and forty nights," ere he entered on his divine mission of mercy.

How soothing to the soul is that communion with the departed, which is kept up by the Catholic practice of praying for the dead? Even the stern Doctor Johnson felt the beauty and the force of this sympathy: he not only defended this practice, but he adopted it himself. He was not satisfied with merely dropping a tear warm from his heart over the grave of his departed mother; but he, at the same time, wafted a fervent prayer to heaven for her repose.* And how elevating and useful, on the other hand, is that constant communion with heaven, which is kept up by the invocation of saints! It stimulates us, not only to admire their supereminent glory and to implore their aid; but also to imitate their virtues. The offices of the church keep up a constant round of anniversary celebrations of the virtues and triumphs of these heroes of Christianity; their virtues are thus always kept fresh in the minds of the faithful, who are by this means powerfully stimulated to follow their example. Who does not perceive the beneficial influence of this practice on the morals of society?

On the subject of marriage, the Catholic church has never swerved in the least from the stern line of duty. She has ever defended its sanctity and maintained its indissolubility. Many of her struggles with princes during the middle ages, were for the vindication of these sacred principles. England was lost to the church, because the unwavering firmness of the church would not permit Henry VIII to repudiate a virtuous wife, and to wed

* See Boswell's Life of Johnson.

another more to his royal taste. She has won imperishable honors in this battle field, on which she has nobly and victoriously contended with the army of the passions.

On this point, as we have seen, the reformers were not so unyielding. They not only allowed two wives to the landgrave of Hesse; but they permitted divorce for trivial causes; and some of them even sanctioned polygamy after the example of the patriarchs. What were the effects of their teaching on this subject, we shall see more fully in the sequel. It will suffice here to remark one obvious result of this laxity of doctrine, in regard to the sacredness of the marriage contract. Before the reformation, divorces were almost unheard of; great princes sometimes applied for them, but met with determined resistance and a stern rebuke, on the part of the church. Even at present, in Catholic countries, they are almost unknown. Is it so in those communities where the influence of the reformation has been extensively felt? Alas! in these, men seem to have lost sight of the divine injunction: "What God has united, let not man put asunder."* Divorces have multiplied to a frightful extent. In the United States, our legislatures receive annually thousands of petitions for divorce: and what is more deplorable, they usually grant the prayer of the petitioners! Is not this a lamentable evil, most injurious to society? Whence does it originate, if not in the weakening of Catholic principles in regard to the indissolubility of the marriage contract, by the counter principles broached at the period of the reformation?

A volume might be written on the salutary influence on society of those distinctive doctrines of the Catholic which Protestants have rejected.† But our limits permitted only the above rapid and imperfect sketch: and we must now

* Matth. xix, 6.

† Those who may wish to see more on this subject, are referred to Scotti—*Teoremi di Politica Christiana*—an Italian work in 2 vols. 8vo.

pass on to the inquiry; what was the moral influence of those new doctrines which the reformation introduced? We have already seen what many of these doctrines were, and we have already been enabled to estimate, in a great measure, their effect on the morals of society. But we will here give some farther details on a subject so interesting.

Luther's famous *(infamous!)* sermon on marriage, preached in the public church of Wittemberg in 1522, gave great scandal, and was a source of incalculable moral evil throughout Germany. It openly pandered to the basest passions of human nature. It was busily circulated and greedily devoured by all classes, among those who were favorable to the reformation. Never was there a grosser specimen of unblushing lubricity: and its having been so much relished by the partisans of Luther, is a certain index of a very low standard of morality at that period. But this was not the only specimen of decency given by the "father of the reformation." Many of his letters to his private friends are too obscene to be exhibited, even in the original Latin. Yet they had a powerful effect on the morals of the age. Luther openly invited the Catholic priests, monks, and nuns, who had vowed celibacy, to break their vows, which he styled the "bonds of antichrist." His soul overflowed with joy at the news of each new sacrilegious marriage. He would congratulate the infringer of his vows, "on his having overcome an impure and damnable celibacy," by entering into marriage, which he painted as "a paradise even in the midst of poverty."* He wrote a work against celibacy and monastic vows, teeming with the strongest appeals to the passions. He openly urged princes to expel by force the religious from their monasteries.†

* "Paradisum arbitror conjugium vel summâ inopiâ laborans." Epist. Nicholao Gerbellis, Nov. 1, 1521.

† See his words quoted by Audin, p. 335, seqq.

Erasmus, an eye witness, paints the disorders to which Luther's epistles, sermons, and works against celibacy, naturally led. He represents certain cities of Germany as swarming with apostate monks, who drank beer to excess, danced and sang in the public streets, and gave into all manner of excesses. He says, "that if they could get enough to eat and a wife, they cared not a straw for any thing else."* "When they found not wives among the female religious, they sought them in the haunts of vice. What cared they for the priestly benediction? They married each other, and celebrated their nuptials by orgies, in which the new married couple generally lost their reason."†

"Formerly," says Erasmus, "men quitted their wives for the sake of the gospel; now-a-days, the gospel flourishes most, when a few succeed in marrying wives with rich dowries."‡ He caustically remarks, "that Œcolampadius had lately married a beautiful young girl, he suspects, to mortify his flesh."§ He also informs us, that these ex-monks, after having become the most zealous partisans of the reformation, subsisted by open robbery of the churches and of their neighbors, indulged to excess in drinking and in games of hazard, and presented a spectacle of the most revolting licentiousness.‖

Luther had taught that "as in the first days of Christianity, the church was forced to exalt virginity among the Pagans, who honored adultery; so, now, when the Lord had made the light of the gospel shine forth, it was necessary to exalt marriage, at the expense of popish celibacy."¶ The apostate monks eagerly seized on this and

* Amant viaticum et uxorem: cœtera pili non faciunt." Erasmi Epist. p. 637.

† Audin p. 336, who quotes from Erasmus—*loco citato*.

‡ "Nunc floret evangelium, si pauci ducant uxores bene dotatas Erasmi Epist. p. 768.

§ Ibid. p. 632. ‖ Ibid. p. 766.

¶ Luther Opp. tom i, p. 526 seqq.

similar teachings of the reformer; and the above are some of the disorders which naturally ensued. But even they are not the worst. Bigamy was quite common among them, at least for a time. They defended it too on scriptural grounds. Luther was appealed to on the subject. In his reply, he wavers and hesitates, wishes each individual to be left to the guidance of his own conscience, and concludes his letter in these words: "for my part I candidly confess, that I could not prohibit any one, who might wish it, to take many wives at once, nor is this repugnant to the holy scriptures. But there are things lawful, which are not expedient. Bigamy is of the number."*

Karlstadt went still farther: he wished to make polygamy obligatory, or at least entirely permissible to all. He said to Luther: "as neither you, nor I, have found a text in the sacred books against bigamy, let us be bigamists and trigamists—let us take as many wives as we can maintain. "Increase and multiply. Do you understand? Accomplish the order of heaven."† This argument must have had great weight with Luther, as he had maintained that celibacy was impossible, and had brought that very text from Genesis, to prove that marriage was a divine command obligatory on all. By the way, as Luther married only at the age of forty-two, what are we to think of the purity of his previous life, when he openly maintained such principles as these? They were well calculated, at any rate, to bring down the lofty standard of Christian morality to that of Mohammedanism: and, if they did not bring about this result, we owe no thanks at least to the reformation. How strangely these loose principles of morality contrast with the stern teachings of the Catholic church on marriage!

* Epist. ad K. Bruck 13, Janu. 1524. "Ego sane fateor me non posse prohibere si quis velit plures ducere uxores, nec repugnat Sacris literis?"

† Apud Audin, p. 339.

II. It was natural to expect, that the influence of such principles as these, as well as of those we developed in another place,* should have been most injurious to public morals. And accordingly we find, from the testimony of the reformers themselves, and of their earliest partisans, that such precisely was the case. Luther himself assures us of this deterioration in public morals. "The world grows worse and worse, and becomes more wicked every day. Men are now more given to revenge, more avaricious, more devoid of mercy, less modest, and more incorrigible; in fine, more wicked than in the papacy."† In another place he says, speaking to his most intimate friends: "one thing no less astonishing than scandalous, is to see that, since the pure doctrine of the gospel has been brought to light (!), the world daily goes from bad to worse."‡ This is not at all astonishing, when we consider the nature of that "pure doctrine."

He draws this dreadful picture of the morals of his time, after "the pure doctrine had been brought to light." "The noblemen and the peasants have come to such a pitch, that they boast and proclaim without scruple, that they have only to let themselves be preached at; but that they would prefer being entirely disenthralled from the word of God: and that they would not give a farthing for all our sermons put together. And how are we to lay this to them as a crime, when they make no account of the world to come? They live as they believe: they are and continue to be swine: they live like swine and they die like real swine."§ Aurifaber, the disciple and bosom friend of Luther, and the publisher of his Table Talk, tells us, that "Luther was wont to say, that after the revelation of his gospel, virtue had become extinct, justice

* Supra, chap. iii. † Luther in *Postillâ sup.* 1 *Dom. Adventus.*
‡ Idem, Table Talk, fol. 55.
§ Id. super i, Epist. Corinth. ch. xv.

oppressed, temperance bound with cords, virtue torn in pieces by the dogs, faith had become wavering, and devotion had been lost."* So notoriously immoral, in fact, were the early Lutherans, that it was then a common saying in Germany, to express a day spent in drinking and debauch: "*hodie Lutheranice vivemus*"—"to-day we will live like Lutherans."†

In another place, Luther laments the moral evils of the reformation, in the following characteristic strain. "I would not be astonished if God should open at length the gates and windows of hell, and snow or hail down *(up?)* devils, or rain down on our heads fire and brimstone, or bury us in a fiery abyss, as he did Sodom and Gomorrha. Had Sodom and Gomorrha received the gifts which have been granted to us—had they seen our visions and heard our instructions—they would yet be standing. They were a thousand times less culpable than Germany, for they had not heard the word of God from their preachers. And we who have received and heard it—we do nothing but rise up against God. . . . . Since the downfall of popery, and the cessation of its excommunications and spiritual penalties, the people have learned to despise the word of God. They care no longer for the churches; they have ceased to fear and to honor God."‡

Martin Bucer, another of the reformers, bears the following explicit testimony on the same subject. "The greater part of the people seem to have embraced the gospel (!), only in order to shake off the yoke of discipline, and the obligation of fasting, penances, &c., which lay upon them in the time of popery, and to live at their pleasure, enjoying their lust and lawless appetite without control. They therefore lend a willing ear to the doctrine that we

* Aurifaber, fol. 623; and Florimond Remond, p. 225.

† Bened. Morgenstern—*Traité de l'Eglise*, p. 221.

‡ Luther Wercke Edit. Altenburg tome iii, p. 519. Reinhard's "Reformations Predigten," tom iii, p. 445.

are justified by faith alone, and not by good works, having no relish for them."* The reformers *ought* to have known what was the real tendency of the new gospel, and they certainly had no motive to exaggerate.

John Calvin draws a picture not much more flattering of the state of morals, in his branch of the "glorious reformation." He states that even the preachers of the new doctrines were notoriously immoral. "There remains still a wound more deplorable. The pastors, yes the pastors themselves who mount the pulpit . . . . are at the present time the most shameful examples of waywardness and other vices. Hence their sermons obtain neither more credit nor authority than the fictitious tales uttered on the stage by the strolling player. . . . . I am astonished that the women and children do not cover them with mud and filth."†

Another leading reformer—Philip Melancthon—informs us, that those who had joined the standard of the reformation at his day "had come to such a pitch of barbarity, that many of them were persuaded that if they fasted one day, they would find themselves dead the night following."‡ And another early Protestant, Jacob Andreas, says: "It is certain that God wishes and requires of his servants a grave and Christian discipline; but it passes with us as a new papacy, and a new monkery."§ And no wonder, after all the teaching on the subject of Luther and the other leading reformers!

Such then were the moral effects of the reformation, according to the testimony of the reformers themselves. They are surely unexceptionable witnesses in the matter. We might allege a multitude of other authorities to the same effect, from Capito, Sturm, Judith, and other early reformers and leading Protestants; but those already ad-

* "De regno Christi." † Livre—*sur les scandales*—p. 128.
‡ In vi, cap. Mathei.
§ Comment. in St. Lucam. ch. xxi, anno 1583.

duced will prove to the satisfaction of every impartial mind, that the influence of the reformation on morals was most injurious.* The reformers professed indeed to *reform* the church in doctrine and morals: they inveighed against the immorality of the Catholic priesthood, whom they abused beyond measure: they set themselves up as patterns for the world: but they forgot withal to reform themselves and their disciples. They even went "daily from bad to worse." They were unmindful of the admonition of the Saviour: "let him that is without sin among you first cast a stone."†

Erasmus has well described this change for the worse in the morals of those who embraced the reformation. "Those whom I had known to be pure, full of candor and simplicity, these same persons have I seen afterwards, when they had gone over to the sect (*of the gospellers*), begin to speak of girls, flock to games of hazard, throw aside prayer, give themselves up entirely to their interests; become the most impatient, vindictive, and frivolous; changed in fact, from men to vipers. I know well what I say."‡ And again; "I see many Lutherans, but few evangelicals. Look a little at these people, and see whether luxury, avarice and lewdness, do not prevail still more amongst them, than among those whom they detest. Show me *one* who by means of this gospel is become better. I will show you very many, who are become worse. Perhaps it has been my bad fortune: but I have seen none who have not become worse by their gospel."§

The testimony of Erasmus is above suspicion. Though he continued in the Catholic church, yet he was the early friend of Luther, Melancthon and many other principal reformers, and he had himself contributed not a little—

* Those who may wish to see more on the subject, are referred to the "Amicable Discussion" by bishop Trevern: vol. i, p. 84 seqq.; and to Audin's "Lives of Luther and Calvin."

† St. John viii, 7. ‡ Epist. *Tractibus Germaniæ inferioris.*

§ Idem. Epist. Anno 1526.

perhaps only indirectly and unintentionally—to the success of the pretended reformation. He was a mild, peaceable man, who liked his ease more than any thing else, and sought to please both sides, but succeeded in pleasing neither. He had joined in the outcry against the Catholic priesthood and monks, and had thereby no doubt greatly aided in heightening the excitement against the Catholic church. The proverb was current in Germany: that "Erasmus had laid the egg, and Luther had hatched it."* This saying perhaps expressed too much; but yet, like most popular adages, it had some foundation in truth. The famous humanist Reuchlin seems to have been another of those wavering and uncertain characters which can be moulded to almost every thing according to circumstances.

For three whole centuries, the reformation has been exerting its moral influence in Germany and northern Europe What have been the practical results of this influence? What is the present condition of those Protestant countries where that influence has been least checked, and most extended and permanent? We will close this chapter, by presenting a few startling facts on this subject from the works of two recent Protestant travellers, Bremner and Laing. Their authority in the matter will scarcely be questioned by Protestants. Themselves bitterly prejudiced against the Catholic church, and enamored with the reformation, they merely state what they saw and ascertained, during a long residence in the countries which they describe.

Of the people of Protestant Norway, Mr. Bremner says: "the Norwegians cannot, with justice, be described as more than 'indifferently moral,' for we always found amongst them a greater desire to take advantage of a

* "Erasmus hat das Ey gelegt, und Luther es ausgebrütet." An old Lutheran painting represented the reformers bearing the ark, and Erasmus dancing before it with all his might.

stranger than in any other part of Europe."* In regard to chastity, he tells us that the statistical returns show that out of every five children which are born, one is illegitimate—the same proportion precisely, in this widely scattered and rural population, as in "the densely crowded and corrupted atmosphere of Paris." Mr. Laing confirms the statement, and tells us of one country parish in particular where, "without a town, or manufacturing establishment, or resort of shipping, or quartering of troops, or other obvious cause," the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children, in the five years from 1826 to 1830, was one in three.†

Both these Protestant travellers tell us, moreover, that in Norway the Sunday is the usual day for dances, for theatrical and other public amusements; and Mr. Laing accounts for this singular fact by the universally received interpretation, in the pure Lutheran church, of the scriptural words, "and the evening and the morning made the first day." Those "pure Lutherans" keep the Sabbath from midday on Saturday to the noon of Sunday! The Lutheran clergy, they likewise inform us, pay little attention to the instruction of the people. In proof of this negligence, they allege the fact that in all Norway there are only three hundred and thirty-six parishes with resident clergymen, who seldom visit their scattered people. They also complain that convicts are there treated more unmercifully than any where else.

The picture they draw of the present moral condition of Sweden and Denmark is still less flattering. Mr.

* "Excursions in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden," &c. By Robert Bremner. 2 vols. 8vo, London, 1840.

† The works of Mr. Laing from which we borrow this and the following facts, are: "Journal of a Residence in Norway during the years 1834, 1835, 1836, made with a view to inquire into the moral and political economy of the country, and the state of the inhabitants," London, 1836; "A Tour in Sweden in 1838," London, 1839; and "Notes of a Traveller," London, 1842. These works are all ably noticed in the Dublin Review for May, 1843.

Bremner tells us that in the female house of correction at Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, he found thirty-eight prisoners condemned for life, "nearly all of whom had been convicted of the too frequent crime of child murder!" Mr. Laing enters at great length into the subject of Swedish morality. He states, and proves from avouched statistical returns, that Sweden is the most corrupt and demoralized country in Europe, and that Stockholm is the most debased city in the world. Let us see his testimony.

"It is a singular and embarrassing fact that the Swedish nation, isolated from the mass of European people, and almost entirely agricultural or pastoral, having, in about 3,000,000 of individuals, only 14,925 employed in manufactories, and these not congregated in one or two places, but scattered among 2,037 factories, having no great standing army or navy, no external commerce, no afflux of strangers, no considerable city but one, and having schools and universities in a fair proportion, and a powerful and complete church establishment, undisturbed in its labors by sect or schism, is, notwithstanding, *in a more demoralized state than any nation in Europe*, more demoralized even than any equal portion of the dense manufacturing population of Great Britain. This is a very curious fact in moral statistics."

He proceeds to establish this "curious fact" by unquestionable statistical evidence. From this it appears that, in 1837, 26,275 persons were prosecuted in Sweden for criminal offences, of whom 21,262 were convicted, being one to every one hundred and fourteen of the entire population accused, and one to every one hundred and forty convicted of crimes of a heinous character. In 1836 the number so convicted was one out of one hundred and thirty-four of the whole population. Among the crimes in the rural population, there were twenty-eight cases of murder, ten of child-murder, four of poisoning, thirteen of bestiality, and nine of violent robbery: and

the proportion was four-fold greater for the town and city population. England is bad enough; one would have thought that England could scarcely be surpassed in crime of every description; but yet in England the proportion of the convicted to the entire population is only as one to one thousand and five. The amount of crime in Sweden is thus seven-fold greater than in England! Is it because there the reformation was more unchecked in its operations?

According to Mr. Laing, the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children for all Sweden, is as one to fourteen; and for the capital, Stockholm, it is as one to two and three-tenths!! In the same city one out of every forty-nine of the inhabitants is annually convicted of some criminal offence!! And, what is more startling yet, Mr. Laing proves that a house of ill-fame was established, and duly fitted out, in Stockholm, by authority of government!!

When these statements of Mr. Laing appeared, the Swedish government attempted to refute them by a pamphlet published in London. This drew from him a "Reply," in which he triumphantly established all the statements he had previously made, and exhibited, in the avouched statistics of the year 1838, others still more appalling. "The divorces of this year were 147; the suicides 172. Of the 2,714 children born in Stockholm that year, 1,577 were legitimate, 1,137 illegitimate, making only a balance of 440 chaste mothers out of 2,714, and the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children, not as one to two and three-tenths, as he had previously stated, but as one to one and a half!!"

Prussia is another country of Europe in which the reformation has had unchecked sway for centuries. Mr. Laing discourses of its moral condition as follows—the "index virtue" of which he speaks is female chastity: "Will any traveller, will any Prussian say that this index virtue of the moral condition of a people is not lower

in Prussia than in almost any part of Europe? It is no uncommon event in the family of a respectable tradesman of Berlin to find upon his breakfast table a little baby, of which, whoever may be the father, he has no doubt at all about the maternal grand-father. Such accidents are so common in the class in which they are least common with us—the middle class, removed from ignorance or indigence—that they are regarded but as accidents, as youthful indiscretions, not as disgraces affecting, as with us, the respectability and happiness of all the kith and kin for a generation."

In a note, he gives the following statistical facts on this subject: "In 1837, the number of the females in the Prussian population between the beginning of their sixteenth and the end of their forty-fifth year—that is, within child-bearing age—was 2,983,146; the number of illegitimate children born in the same year was 39,501; so that one in every seventy-five of the whole of the females of an age to bear children had been the mother of an illegitimate child." He adds: "Prince Puckler Muskau (a Prussian) states in one of his late publications (Südöstlicher Bildersaal, 3 Thel. 1841) that the character of the Prussians for honesty stands lower than that of any other of the German populations."

When we weigh well all these facts, and remember also that from a parliamentary report, made two years ago, it appeared that in Protestant London upwards of 80,000 females had forgotten to be virtuous, we will be enabled to estimate properly what has been the moral influence of the reformation.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

General influence of the reformation on worship—Audin's picture of it—Luther rebukes violence—But wavers—Giving life to a skeleton—Taking a leap—Mutilating the sacraments—New system of Judaism—Chasing away the mists—Protestant inconsistencies—A dreary waste—No altars nor sacrifice—A land of mourning—Protestant plaints—And tribute to Catholic worship—A touching anecdote—Continual prayer—Vandalism rebuked—Grandeur of Catholic worship—Churches always open—Protestant worship—The *Sabbath* day—Getting up a revival—Protestant music and prayer—The pew system—The fashionable religion—The two forms of worship compared—St. Peter's church—The fine arts.

In nothing perhaps was the influence of the reformation more pernicious, than in the changes which it caused to be introduced into public worship. It stripped the ancient Catholic service of all its beauty and simple grandeur: it dried up the deep fountains of its melody—hushed its organs, muffled its bells, and put out its lights. It rudely tore away the ornaments of its priesthood, stripped its altars, and chased away the clouds of its ascending incense. It did more. It destroyed the beautiful paintings and sculptures, with which art, paying tribute to religion, had decorated the walls of her churches; it entirely removed those sacred emblems of piety. Tearing them in shreds or breaking them in pieces, it gave them to the flames, and then scattered their ashes to the winds. And, as if these feats of vandalism were not enough to prove its *burning* zeal for religion, it aimed a mortal blow at the very substance of worship: it abolished the daily sacri-

fice, removed the altars, and annihilated the priesthood. And then, exhausted with its labors, Protestantism lay down and fell asleep amidst the ruins it had caused!*

M. Audin gives the following graphic description of the effects of early reformation zeal on public worship. "Throughout the whole of Saxony, no more canticles were heard; no more incense, no more lights on the altars, no more organs combining their melody with the infant's hymn, or sacerdotal anthem. The church walls were bare; the light had no longer to steal through the painted windows, for they had all been broken, under the pretext that they favored idolatry. The Protestant temple resembled every thing but the house of God. The magnificence and poetry of Catholic worship, the loss of which modern Protestants deplore, every where disappeared."†

Luther at first disapproved of the intemperate zeal of Karlstadt and other hotheaded disciples, who, during his absence from Wittemberg, had abolished the mass, and removed by violence the paintings and statues from the church. Yet his disapproval did not, it would seem, proceed so much from a horror of the act itself, as of the violence which had attended it; and more particularly from the circumstance, that this innovation had taken place without his having been previously consulted. In his harangue against those new Iconoclasts, he said: "you ought to know that you are to listen to no one but to me. With the help of God, Doctor Martin Luther has advanced first in the new way; the others followed after him: they ought to exhibit the docility of disciples, as their duty is to obey. It is to me that God has revealed his word; it is out of my mouth that it has proceeded free from all stain. . . . . Was I at such a distance that I could not be consulted? Am I no longer the source of pure doc-

* "Le Protestantisme fatigué s'est endormi sur des ruines!" Abbé De Lamennais.

† Life of Luther, p. 331.

trine? . . . . It is neither commanded nor prohibited to keep images. I wish that superstition had not introduced them amongst us; but however, they ought not to be removed by tumult."*

But Luther, however he might deplore, could not curb the destructive spirit of his disciples. He could not prevent them from wielding the weapons himself had placed in their hands. He could not control the storm which he himself had put in motion. The work of destruction went on, till scarce a vestige of the venerable and time honored Catholic worship remained behind. He himself was uncertain and wavering, as to the portion of Catholic worship he should retain. The people of Wittemberg murmured, when the chapter of the church of All Saints in that city abolished the mass. Luther restored it: not however as a sacrifice, but as a mere popular symbol. He took from it the offertory and the canon, and all the forms of sacrifice; while he retained the elevation of the bread and wine by the priest, the sacerdotal salutation to the assistants, the mixture of water and wine, and the use of the Latin language."†

To enliven somewhat this mutilated skeleton of the old service, he retained many of the Catholic proses and hymns, uniting with them some compositions of the old German poets. "He himself composed some to replace our hymns and proses, which are precious monuments of the poetry of the early ages of Catholicism. Those sweet and simple melodies which were by turns joyous and austere, gay and melancholy, according to the occasion, were now replaced, in the Protestant churches, by a monotonous drawl. The reformed church thus lost the poems, inspirations and symbols of the Catholic muse."‡

The liturgy was not the only subject on which the re-

* Apud Audin, Ibid. pp. 237, 238. † Audin, Ibid. p. 333.

‡ Ibid. For some beautiful and charming reflections on this subject, see an article "on prayer and prayer-books," in a late number of the Dublin Review.

former hesitated. His whole career in fact is marked with hesitancy and doubt, as to what he should reject, and what he should retain, of the old Catholic institutions. He found himself often in trying and difficult positions. His disciples sought to drag him down the declivity of reform faster than the sturdy monk wished to travel. Sometimes he listened to their clamors; sometimes he sternly rebuked them for their too ardent zeal. Hence his perpetual inconsistencies. On the subject of auricular confession, he contradicted himself more than once: at times he recognized its divine origin, and proclaimed its great utility to society: again he would call it the invention of Satan, and "the executioner of consciences."* He betrayed similar doubts and inconsistencies as to the number of the sacraments instituted by Christ. He stood on the brink of a precipice, and yielded at times to dizziness, ere he took the fatal leap from the summit level of Catholicity, into the yawning abyss, the boiling and hissing noise of whose troubled waters already grated on his ears!

But his disciples were not so scrupulous. They boldly rejected five out of the seven sacraments, and even stripped the two they retained—baptism and the Lord's Supper—of every life giving principle. They did not any longer view them as the channels of grace, through which the waters of life eternal flow into the soul of the Christian. This they rejected with horror as a popish superstition. They denied that the sacraments had, from the design and institution of Christ, any intrinsic efficacy whatever: they were the mere external symbols of a grace, which they were not the instruments for imparting. They were mere signs and figures, lifeless in themselves, and usefu and available, only through and in proportion to the faith and other acts, of the recipient. In fact they were brought down, in every respect, to a level with the ancient Jewish

* See his Treatise—De ratione confitendi. Tom. vi, edit. Altenb. Tom. i, opp. edit. Jena.

types and figures; and like them, they were mere "weak and needy elements."*

They were even inferior to these, in point of appropriateness and significancy, as figures. Was not the Jewish eating of the paschal lamb "of one year old and without stain," a much more lively and appropriate type of the death of Christ—"the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world"—than the symbols of mere bread and wine? What aptitude is there, in fact, in bread to be a figure of flesh, or even in wine which is often colorless, to be a figure of blood? Had Christ intended a mere figure, would he not have selected more appropriate emblems? Did he mean to bring back the Christian religion, which he watered with his own blood, to the mere standard of Judaism—did he mean to lower it even beneath this standard? Did he institute a religion, the distinguishing ordinances of which should be nothing more substantial than the Jewish tropes and figures? Was it to be still enveloped in that dense mist which had overhung the ark of the covenant, and the institutions of the Jewish religion? Or did he not rise, as "the Sun of Justice," to chase away those mists which darkened the twilight of the Jewish types, and to usher in the clear, cloudless day of living and breathing realities?

Luther had retained indeed a belief in the real presence, blended, however, with the palpable absurdity of consubstantiation, by which he maintained the simultaneous presence of the substances of the bread and wine with the body of Christ. But even the disciples of the reformer have long since rejected this monstrous system. After six different modifications of their creed on the subject, to suit the tastes or to meet the objections of the Sacramentarians, they have at length quietly coalesced with their former opponents; and the doctrine of the real presence has thus grown almost, if not entirely, obsolete among

* Galatians, iv, 9.

Protestants.* Thus throughout the land of Protestantism this beautiful doctrine, which gives a sublime character to the Catholic worship, and is a key to all its magnificent ceremonials, has been utterly banished. The Protestant church and worship are no longer ennobled and vivified by this life-giving presence of the Word made flesh. Christ is banished from his holy temple: he is no longer in the midst "of the children of men," where he erewhile delighted to dwell. And Protestantism presents, in its bleak and dreary waste, a sad proof of his absence! It is a land "of closed churches and hushed bells, of unlighted altars and unstoled priests!"†

No—its condition is yet more deplorable. It has not even "unlighted altars:" it has no altars at all. Its altars fell under the same fell stroke which annihilated its sacrifice: "Sacrifice and oblation is cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests, the Lord's ministers, have mourned; the country is destroyed; the land hath mourned."‡ This land of mourning, from which even "the priests, the Lord's ministers," have been banished, has been reposing for "many days" "without sacrifice, and without altar, and without ephod, and without theraphim."§

Where is there to be found, in the land of Protestantism, that clean oblation foretold by God's holy prophet: "for from the rising of the sun, even to the going down, my name is great among the gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a *clean oblation;* for my name is great among the gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts?"‖ Where that altar which St. Paul

* For a full and well written account of these variations of Lutheranism on the subject of the eucharist, and for an account of the singular manner of the coalition indicated in the text, see Moore's "Travels of an Irish Gentleman," &c. p. 202 and p. 193.

† W. Faber (a Protestant), "Sights and Thoughts in foreign Churches."

‡ Joel i, 9, 10. § Osea iii, 4. ‖ Malachy i, 2.

assures us the early Christians had: "We have an altar whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle?"* Until Protestantism appeared, with its blighting influence on worship, who ever heard of a religion, Christian, or even pagan, the very essence of which did not consist in an external sacrifice? In this respect Protestantism has *protested* against the unanimous voice of mankind. And we have already seen from *whom* Luther first learned the reasons for this protest, and how eagerly he seized and acted on them.†

With the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the altar, fell also the splendid worship with which they were connected. Protestants, even those of Germany, are now beginning to appreciate and to deplore this desecration of God's holy sanctuary, and this desolation of his vineyard; and their voice of wailing has been re-echoed by the Puseyites in England. We will give a few instances of this splendid tribute paid, by late Protestant writers in Germany, to the substance and forms of the splendid old Catholic worship.

Isidore, Count Von Loeben, exclaims: "Admirable ceremonial, replete with harmony! It is the diamond which glitters on the crown of faith! Whoever has a poetic spirit must feel a tendency to Catholicism!"‡ Elsewhere he says: "The Catholic church, with its ever open door, with its undying lamps, with its joyful or mournful strains, its hosannas or its lamentations, its hymns, its masses, its festivals and reminiscences, resembles a mother, who ever holds forth her arms to receive the prodigal child. It is a fountain of sweet water, around which are assembled multitudes, to imbibe vigor, health, and life."§

Another German Protestant breaks forth into this exclamation: "How beautiful is its music! How it addresses both mind and sense! Those melodious notes

* Heb. xiii, 10.
† Supra, chap. 1.
‡ In his Lotosblätter, 1817.
§ Ibid. p. 1.

and voices, those canticles which breathe so pure a spirituality, those clouds of incense, those chimes which a disdainful philosophy condescends to despise — all these please God. Architects and sculptors! you have acted wisely, and ennobled your art, by raising churches to the Divinity."*

Another, E. Spindler, thus praises a beautiful custom peculiar to Catholicity: "It is not only an ancient, but a beautiful custom, to encircle the graves of the dead on the first and second of November. The peasants of the villages hasten to the cemeteries: they kneel by a wooden cross, or other such funeral ornaments. They think on the past, on the shortness of human life. Then the departed are crowned with flowers, to signify the life that will never end. The lamp burns to remind us of the light which shall never be obscured!"†

Another relates the following touching anecdote: "I saw also a Franciscan kneeling before a fresco painting of Christ on the walls of the cloister, which was admirable for its truth and beauty of expression. On hearing me approach, he rose up. 'Father, that is really beautiful.' 'Yes; but the original is still more so,' said the monk, smiling. 'Then why make use of a material image in prayer!' 'I see,' said he, 'that you are a Protestant; but do you not see that the artist modulates and ennobles the fantasies of my own imagination? Have you not always experienced that this faculty calls up a thousand different forms? Permit me to prefer, when there is question of images, the work of a great master to the creation of my own fancy.' I was silent," concludes the writer.‡

In one of his works,§ Clausen, another Protestant, pays the following willing tribute to the encouragement of continual prayer by the Catholic church: "When a poor

* Labn. Syst. Theol. p. 205. † Zeitspiegel, 1791.
‡ Ch. Fr. D. Schubart—Leben und Gesinnungen—Stuttgart. 1791.
§ P. 790. Apud Audin, p. 331.

pilgrim, wearied with fatigue, but light of heart, kneels on the altar steps to thank Him who has watched over him during a long and perilous journey; when a distracted mother comes into the temple to pray for the recovery of her son, whom the physicians have given over; when in the evening, just as the last rays of the sun steal through the stained glass on the figure of a young female engaged in prayer, when the flickering lights of the tapers die away on the pale lips of the clergy, as they chaunt the praises of the Eternal:—tell me, does not Catholicism teach us that life should be one long prayer, that art and science ought to combine to glorify God, and that the church, where so many canticles are simultaneously hymned forth, where devotion puts on all conceivable forms, has a right to our love and respect?"

Finally, another thus openly censures the intemperate vandalism of the reformers in destroying the most beautiful portions of Catholic worship: "How blind were our reformers! While destroying the greater part of the allegories of the Catholic church, they believed that they were making war on superstitions! It was the abuse they ought to have proscribed."* The famous Novalis in fact says that "Luther was not acquainted with the spirit of Christianity."† Thus have the children borne testimony against their fathers in the faith!‡

It is related of Frederick II, king of Prussia, that after having assisted at a solemn high mass celebrated in the church of Breslau by cardinal Zinzendorf, he remarked: "The Calvinists treat God as an inferior, the Lutherans, as an equal; but the Catholics treat him as God." And though this is perhaps too strong an expression of the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant forms of worship; yet this difference is very great and striking

* Fessler—Theresia 2, p. 101.

† "Luther verkannte den geist des Christenthums."

‡ For more testimonies of Protestants on this subject, see Jul. Höninghaus "Das Resultat meiner wanderungen"—Aschaffenburg, 1835.

even to the most superficial or prejudiced observer. Who has not been impressed with the grandeur, the solemnity, and the noble dignity of the Catholic ceremonial? Who has not felt a sentiment of reverence and of awe come over him, when, at the most solemn part of this service, the peal of the organ ceases, the voice of music is hushed, and, while clouds of incense are ascending, the priests, the ministers and the people fall prostrate in silent prayer before the altar, on which the Lamb is present "as it were slain?" Who has not felt a thrill of rapturous emotion, when, after this solemn moment has passed, the music again breaks forth, mingling joyous with solemn notes, and pouring forth a stream of melody on the soul! Who has not been struck with the pathetic simplicity, the unction, and noble grandeur of the Gregorian chaunt, especially in the preface of the Pater Noster! And who has not marked the reverent awe with which Catholics are wont to assist at the service, as well as the general respect they pay to the church of God!

In Catholic countries the church is ever open, inviting the faithful to enter at all hours, and to pour forth their joys or their sorrows before the altar. And in Rome particularly, enter any one of its three hundred and fifty churches at what hour you may, you will always find some persons kneeling, engaged in secret prayer. The Catholic worship is not confined to Sundays: it is the business of every day, and there is accordingly a special service for every day in the year. The constant round of festivals presents to the minds of the people, with dramatic effect, the most interesting portions of sacred history, as well as the most striking incidents in the lives of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints: and the necessary result is, to keep these things constantly fresh in the memory. Finally, the Catholic is bound by the law of his church to assist at divine service, and to hear mass every Sunday and festival of the year, and thus he comes constantly under all those strong beneficial influences of his religion.

And if, notwithstanding all these advantages, he is still recreant to the voice of conscience and of duty, it is surely from no lack of provision for his spiritual culture on the part of the church. She shows herself, in every respect, the tender and solicitous mother.

Do the multiplied forms of worship introduced by the reformation possess these advantages; or do they combine these happy influences? To begin with that last named above: is it not a saddening reflection, that in Protestant countries, no obligation is felt to attend divine service, even on Sundays? Take London for an example of this. According to Colquhoun's statistical views of that Protestant metropolis, out of nearly fifteen hundred thousand inhabitants, about one-third, or five hundred thousand *never* attend church; and another third attend it only occasionally! Of the remaining third, who attend regularly, more than half are Roman Catholics.

True, in our own country the case is somewhat different: but it is only because here Protestantism has not *yet* produced, at least to the same extent, the evil fruits of religious indifference and of infidelity, which it has never failed to yield in countries where it has been long established. But even here it is daily producing them more and more; and each succeeding generation will necessarily deteriorate. Look at Boston and N. York, where infidelity has already boldly raised its standard. It is only by almost limiting religious service to the Sunday—miscalled the *Sabbath*—and by continued efforts through the press and the pulpit to keep up even an exaggerated and Jewish feeling of reverence for this day among the people, that any thing like regular attendance on Sunday service is obtained.

In fact, according to the gloomy ideas attached by custom to the "Sabbath" day, the people, after having labored constantly through the six days of the week, have no other place of social meeting but at the meeting house; and they have no alternative but to repair thither, or to

sit down moodily and inertly at home. And we have no doubt, that it is to these causes, and to the cutting off of all sources of popular amusement, as much at least as to zeal for religious worship, that we are to attribute the frequenting of the Protestant places of public service in the United States.

But is this service in itself inviting or impressive? Has it any thing in it to stir up the deep fountains of feeling, to call forth the music and poetry of the soul; to convey salutary instruction, or to awaken lively interest? We would not speak lightly or irreverently on a subject so grave: but with due deference to the feelings of our dissentient brethren, we must express the conviction, that their service is sadly deficient in solemnity, and in feeling; and that it possesses not one trait of grandeur or sublimity. It has not one element of poetry or of pathos. Generally cold and lifeless, it becomes warm only by a violent effort, and then it runs into the opposite extreme of intemperate excitement.

Can its music, with its loud, multiplied and discordant sounds, compare with the grave and solemn melody of the Catholic worship? Can its long extemporaneous prayers, pronounced by a minister dressed in his every-day attire, and often interrupted by the sharp amens and discordant groans of his hearers, compare, for solemnity and effect, with that which is poured forth by the priest at the altar, robed in the venerable uniform of eighteen hundred years' standing, and which is accompanied by those of the people uttered in the hushed stillness of secret devotion? For our parts, we greatly prefer calm composure and sanctuary quietude in the church, to noisy prayer and almost boisterous excitement. The Lord does not usually communicate himself in the whirlwind, or in the earthquake, or in the raging fire; but in the breathing of the gentle breeze.*

* See iii Book of Kings, ch. xix, v. 11, 12. In Prot. version, i Book Kings.

Again, in Catholic countries there is no pew system. The rich and the poor, the prince and the beggar, the refined princess and the lowly peasant girl—kneel side by side on the same pavement, and at the foot of the same altar. There is no distinction there in the house of God. Is it so in Protestant countries? Has not the pew system, with all its invidious distinctions of rank, with its luxurious and splendidly-cushioned seats, more suited for lolling than for prayers, obtained universally wherever Protestantism has been established? And has not the natural and necessary effect been, to introduce worldly notions even into the house of God; and to make church-going a matter of fashion and respectability? Do not many people inquire, before they embrace a religion, which is the most *respectable* church?

True, in countries where Protestants are most numerous, Catholics likewise have often, we humbly think very unfortunately, borrowed the invidious system from their neighbors: but candor will allow, that among them it is not pushed to the same extreme as among Protestants. It is strongly counteracted in its evil tendencies among them by the spirit of their church.

The Catholic ceremonial has been designed and planned on a grand scale: it exhibits to the best advantage in the largest churches; it has the most impressive and sublime effect in such temples as St. Mary Major's and St. Peter's. The Protestant service, on the contrary, is as contracted in its nature, as it is meager in its details, and cold and unimpressive in its general effect. It is wholly out of place in a very extensive church. In St. Paul's church, in London, it is confined to one segment of the centre aisle: the other portions of the church are utterly useless. So it is in the splendid old cathedrals of England, Ireland, and Scotland, built by our Catholic forefathers on the grand scale of the Catholic worship, but now occupied as Protestant meeting-houses. In the Protestant service every thing is for the ear, and

almost nothing for the eye: in the Catholic, all the senses are addressed, and enchained.

In nothing does the immense distinction between the Catholic and the Protestant forms of worship appear more strikingly, than in the marked difference in the structure, beauty, and ornaments of the churches in which they are respectively exhibited. Where, for instance, in the land of Protestantism, will you find one church to compare in beauty and sublimity with St. Peter's at Rome? It is an architectural monument as old as Protestantism, and much more stable and permanent! It has seen hundreds of sects arise, create excitement for a day, and then die away; while itself has continued in unfading beauty—the sublime emblem of unchanging and undying Catholicity! Not one of its stones has started from its place: not one of its pillars has been shaken; not one of its arches has been broken! It stands up in all the vigor and freshness of youth—a suitable type of the ever blooming and virgin spouse of Christ, "without spot, without wrinkle, without blemish."* Enter its portals, and your soul swells, and becomes "as colossal as the edifice itself:" you involuntarily exclaim: "truly, this is the house of God and the gate of heaven!" The fine arts have here been lavish of their tribute to religion and to God: and they speak silently, but eloquently, of the principles of Christ, of his apostles, and of his saints. Why have these lovely arts been banished from the Protestant churches?

"O when will the ages of faith e'er return,
To gladden the nations again?
O when shall the flame of sweet charity burn,
To warm the cold bosoms of men?

When the angel of vengeance hath sheathed his sword,
And his vials have drenched the land:
When the pride of the sophist hath bent to the Lord,
And trembled beneath his strong hand."

* Ephesians, chap. v.

CHAPTER X.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON THE BIBLE, ON BIBLE READING, AND BIBLICAL STUDIES.

"By various texts we both uphold our claim,
Nay, often ground our titles on the same;
After long labors lost and time's expense,
Both grant the words, and quarrel for the sense.
Thus all disputes forever must depend,
For no dumb rule can controversies end."—*Dryden.*

"Mark you this, Bassanio:
The devil can cite scripture for his purpose."—*Shakspeare.*

Protestant boastings—Theory of M. D'Aubigné—Luther finds a Bible—How absurd!—The "chained Bible"—Seckendorf *versus* D'Aubigné—The Catholic church and the Bible—The Latin Language—Vernacular versions before Luther's—In Germany—In Italy—In France—In Spain—In England—In Flanders—In Sclavonia—In Sweden—In Iceland—Syriac and Armenian versions—Summary and Inference—Polyglots—Luther's false assertion—Reading the Bible—Fourth rule of the index—A religious vertigo remedied—More harm than good—Present discipline—A common slander—Protestant versions—Mutual compliments—Version of king James—The Doway and Vulgate Bibles—Private interpretation—German Rationalism—Its blasphemies—Rationalism in Geneva.

Our inquiry into the influence of the reformation on religion would be incomplete, without some examination of the extent of this influence on the Bible, and on the general diffusion of Biblical learning. It is one of the proudest boasts of the reformation, to have rescued the Bible from the obscurity to which the Roman Catholic church had consigned it; to have first translated it into the vernacular tongues; and to have opened its hitherto concealed treasures of heavenly wisdom to the body of the

people. These pretensions have been so often and so confidently repeated, as to have passed current for the truth, even with many persons of sincerity and information. And so firm is the conviction of many, that the Catholic church studiously concealed the sacred writings from the multitude, and that the reformers brought them out "from under the bushel" to be a light to the nations; that it is exceedingly difficult to remove it, even by the sternest facts and the most overwhelming evidence.

The theory of M. D'Aubigné on this subject is indeed strange, but it has not the merit of novelty. Many a credulous and drivelling theologaster had often before woven the same tissue of absurd speculation. According to our historian of the reformation, Luther owed his first conversion to Christianity to an accidental discovery of the Bible in the Library of the University at Erfurth. "One day" (he had been two years at Erfurth, and was twenty years of age) "he was opening the books in the library one after another, in order to read the names of the authors. One which he opened in its turn drew his attention: *he had not seen any thing like it till that hour:* he reads the title, it is a Bible, a rare book, *unknown at that time!* His interest is strongly excited: he is filled with astonishment at finding more in this volume than those fragments of the gospels and epistles, which the church has selected to be read to the people in their places of worship every Sunday in the year. Till then he had thought that they were the whole word of God. And here are so many pages, so many chapters, so many books, of which he had no idea! His heart beats as he holds in his hand all the scripture divinely inspired. With eagerness and indescribable feelings he turns over those leaves of the word of God. The first page that arrests his attention, relates the history of Hannah and the young Samuel."*

He then relates, how the young Luther piously re-

* Vol. i, p. 131.

solved to imitate the devotedness of the young Samuel; and continues: "the Bible that had filled him with such transport was in Latin. He soon returned to the library to find his treasure again. He read and re-read, and then in his surprise and joy went back to read again. The first gleams of a new truth then arose in his mind. Thus has God caused him to find his holy word! He has now discovered the book of which he is one day to give to his countrymen that admirable translation, in which the Germans for three centuries have read the oracles of God. For the first time, perhaps, this precious volume has been removed from the place that it occupied in the library of Erfurth. This book, deposited on the unknown shelves of a dark room, is soon to become the book of life for a whole nation. The reformation lay hid in that Bible."* This was not however the only Bible he had the good fortune to find: for after he had entered the convent of Augustinians at Erfurth, "he found another Bible fastened by a chain."†

M. D'Aubigné professes to borrow all this fine history from Mathesius, a disciple and an ardent and credulous admirer of Luther, and from M. Adam, another biographer of the reformer. It is a story absurd enough in all conscience, and too clumsily contrived even for a well digested romance. What? Are we to believe that Luther, at the age of twenty, did not know that there was a Bible, until he chanced to discover one in the library at Erfurth? And that until then he piously believed, that the whole scriptures were comprised in that choice selection of gospels and epistles, read on Sunday and festivals in the church service? He, too, a young man of great talent and promise, who had successively attended the schools of Mansfeld, Eisenach and Magdeburg, and had already been two years at the university of Erfurth! *Credat Judæus Apella!* The thing is utterly incredible, and stamped

* Ibid. p. 132.

† Ibid. p. 141.

with absurdity on its very face. Luther must have been singularly stupid indeed, had he remained thus ignorant. And then the idea intended to be conveyed by the chained Bible! Would the good monks have enchained it, unless it had been in such demand with the people as to endanger its safety? In that early stage of the art of printing, all books were much more scarce and more highly prized than at present; and perhaps then, as now, borrowed books were seldom returned to the owner.

M. D'Aubigné in the course of his history repeatedly quotes Seckendorf, the biographer and great admirer of Luther. Did he never chance to read in the first book of this writer's "Commentaries on Lutheranism," a passage in which he states, that three distinct editions of the Bible, *translated into German*, were published at Wittemberg, in 1470, 1483, and 1490: one of them seven years before the birth of Luther, another in the very year of his birth, and a third seven years thereafter?* And all these in the immediate vicinity of Luther's birth place; not to mention another edition, which the same author assures us,† was published not far distant,—at Augsburg, in 1518, just one year after Luther had turned reformer, and twelve years before he published his own German version of the Bible! How could M. D'Aubigné avoid seeing this passage in his own favorite historian for reference: and if he saw it, what are we to think of his honesty in wholly concealing it, and even in stating what is plainly contradicted by it—that "the Bible was then an unknown book;" and that Luther never saw it till his 20th year?

The Bible then an unknown book! Who preserved this book during the previous fifteen hundred years? From whom did the reformers receive it? Who kept it safe through all dangers; in the midst of conflagrations, wars, and the torrents of barbarian incursion? Who copied it

* Commentarii in Luther. Lib. 1, sec. 51. § cxxv. p. 204.
† Ibid.

over and again, before the art of printing? The Roman Catholic church did all this: and yet she is to be accused of having concealed this book of life from the people! But for her patient labor, vigilant watchfulness, and maternal solicitude, the Bible might have perished with thousands of other books: and yet she, forsooth, was an enemy of this book, and wished to keep it under a bushel! She read choice selections from it to her people every Sunday and festival, even according to the avowal of her bitterest enemy, M. D'Aubigné; and yet she wished to conceal this treasure from the people! A curious way of concealing it, truly!

But perhaps she preserved it in the Latin tongue only, and was opposed to its general circulation in the living languages of Europe. She did no such thing, as we shall presently see; though even if she had done this, she would not have concealed the Bible from the people. The Latin language continued to be that which was most generally understood, and even spoken in Europe, until the reign of Charlemagne, in the beginning of the ninth century: and even for several centuries afterwards, it continued to be very generally known, while the modern languages were struggling into form. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, and for a long time afterwards, it was the only language of literature, of theology, of medicine, and of legislation. Most of the modern languages of Europe were formed from it, and were so similar to it both in words and in general structure, that the common people of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and even France, could understand that mother tongue without great difficulty. In Hungary, it had been the common language of the people since the days of king Stephen, in the tenth century. It was taught and studied in every school and college of Christendom, and it was the medium through which most other branches were taught. It was, then, at the time of the reformation, a language which was very commonly understood in Europe. Therefore, even if the Catholic

church had given the Bible to the people only in the Latin vulgate, she would not have concealed it; nor would it have remained "an unknown book." It is a notorious fact, that one of the first books published after the invention of the art of printing, was the Latin Bible.*

But it is well ascertained, that long before the reformation of Luther, the people of almost every country in Europe had the Bible in their own vernacular tongues. In most nations, there was not only one, but there were many different versions.

We begin with Germany, the theatre of the reformation. We have already seen the testimony of Seckendorf on the subject. The Germans had no less than *five* different versions of the scriptures into their own language; of which three were previous to that of Luther in 1530; and two were contemporary with, or immediately subsequent to it. The oldest was that made by Ulphilas, bishop of the Mæso-Goths (now Wallachians), as early as the middle of the fourth century.† This version seems to have been used for several centuries by many of the older Gothic and German Christians. The second version was that into Teutonic ascribed to Charlemagne (beginning of ninth century), probably because it was made by some learned man under his direction. Besides, there was a very old rhythmical paraphrase of the four gospels, much used in Germany from the time of the first emperor Louis.

The third German version was a translation from the Latin vulgate by some person unknown, an edition of which was printed as early as the year 1466: two copies of this edition are still preserved in the senatorial library at Leipsic. Before the appearance of the German Bible of Luther, the version last named had been republished in Germany at least *sixteen times:* once at Strasburg, five times

* Hallam proves that it was the first book printed, probably in the year 1455.—"History of Literature," *sup. cit.* vol. 1, p. 96.

† See Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, p. 240–5.

at Nuremburg, and ten times at Augsburg. These various editions often claimed to be new versions, in consequence of the improvements they professed to have introduced into the original version of 1466. This was particularly the case with the edition published at Augsburg in 1477, and also with that at Nuremburg in 1483, which latter was embellished with numerous wood-cuts.

Thus, before the publication of Luther's translation, there had been in Germany no less than three distinct versions, the last of which had passed through at least seventeen different editions. Add to these the three editions of Wittemberg, and the one at Augsburg, mentioned by Seckendorf above, and not included in this estimate, and we ascertain that the Bible had already been reprinted in the German language no less than *twenty-one times*, before Luther's appeared.*

In 1534, John Dietemberg published his new German translation from the Latin vulgate at Mayence, under the auspices of the arch-bishop and elector, Albert. It passed through upwards of *twenty* editions in the course of a hundred years, four of which appeared at Mayence, and seventeen at Cologne. The style of it was somewhat unpolished, but it was esteemed a faithful translation. In 1537, another Catholic version appeared under the supervision of Doctors Emser and Eck, the two learned champions of Catho-

* These facts, and those that will follow on the same subject, are all established by the learned De Long, in his *Bibliotheca Sacra* (tom. 1. p. 354 seqq. edit. Paris 1723). They are also proved by a Calvinist writer, David Clement, librarian to the king of Prussia, in his *Bibliotheque Curieuse*, &c. (9 vols. 4to. Gottingen 1750). See also Geddes' "Prospectus for a New Translation," 4to. p. 103 seqq., and Audin's "Life of Luther," p. 216 seqq. for many of these facts. Also a learned article on the subject in the 2d No. of the Dublin Review, where most of the facts we have alleged, or will allege, are clearly proved. The writer of this paper has however omitted Seckendorf's statement: and he likewise supposes that Luther's version appeared only in 1534; whereas from Seckendorf's detailed account of it, it would seem to have been completed in 1530.

licity against Luther. This version likewise passed through many editions.

While on the subject of German Bibles, we may here remark, though it does not come exactly within our present plan, that Gaspar Ulenberg published a new version in 1630; and that during the last forty years, several other new versions have appeared in Catholic Germany, of which those of Schwartzel and Brentans are the most popular.

The facts already stated prove how utterly unfounded and recklessly false is the statement of M. D'Aubigné, that before the reformation "the Bible was an unknown book." They demonstrate triumphantly, that the Catholics of Germany were much more zealous in the circulation of the scriptures, than the self-styled reformers, with all their boasting and that of their friends.

But we will pursue this line of argument still farther, and prove, on the unquestionable authorities referred to above, that other Catholic countries were not behind Germany in the will to translate the scriptures into the vernacular tongues, and to circulate them among the people. In fact, there is not a country in Europe in which the Bible had not been repeatedly translated and published long before the reformation.

In Italy, there were two versions anterior to that of Luther: that by the Dominican, Jacobus à Voragine, archbishop of Genoa, which version, according to the testimony of Sixtus Senensis,* was completed as early as 1290; and that by Nicholas Malermi, a Camaldolese monk, which was first printed at Rome and Venice in the same year, 1471, and which had passed through *thirteen* different editions before the year 1525. This was also reprinted *eight* times more before the year 1567, with the express permission of the *Santo Uffizio.* Almost simultaneously with that of Luther, there appeared two other Italian transla-

* *Bibliotheca sacra*, Tom. 1, p. 397.

tions of the Bible: that by Antonio Bruccioli* in 1532, which in twenty years passed through *ten* editions; and that by Santes Marmochino, which was printed at Venice in 1538, 1546, and 1547.

The oldest French version of the Bible was that by Des Moulins, whose "Bible Historyal"—almost a complete translation of the Bible—appeared, according to Usher, about the year 1478. A new edition of it, corrected by Rely, bishop of Angers, was published in 1487, and was successively reprinted *sixteen* different times before the year 1546: four of these editions appeared at Lyons, and twelve at Paris. In 1512, Le Fevre published a new French translation, which passed through many editions. A revision of the version was made by the divines of Louvain, in 1550, and was reprinted in France and Flanders, *thirty-nine* times before the year 1700. More recently, a great variety of new Catholic versions have appeared in France; of which those by De Sacy, Corbin, Amelotte, Maralles, Godeau, and Huré, are the most celebrated.

According to Mariana, the great Spanish historian, the Bible was translated into Castilian by order of Alphonso the Wise. The whole Bible was translated into the Valencian dialect of the Spanish, in the year 1405, by Boniface Ferrier, brother of St. Vincent Ferrier. It was printed in 1478, and reprinted in 1515, *with the formal consent of the Spanish Inquisition.* In 1512 the Epistles and Gospels were translated into Spanish by Ambrosio de Montesma. This work was republished at Antwerp in 1544, at Barcelona in 1601 and 1608, and at Madrid in 1603 and 1615.

In England, besides the version by the venerable Bede in the eighth century, and that partial one of the Psalms

* It is but fair to say, that this version was deemed inaccurate, and was subsequently suppressed by the competent authorities, with the consent of the author. Marmochino corrected its faults.

ascribed to Alfred the Great* in the ninth, there was a full translation of the whole Bible into the English of that period, finished about the year 1290, long before the version of Wickliffe in the fifteenth century.

In the year 706, Adhelm, first bishop of Salisbury, according to the testimony of the Protestant biblicist Horn, translated the Psalter into Saxon. At his persuasion also, Egbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, translated the four Gospels. In the fourteenth century, a new English version of the whole Bible was made by John de Trevisa. In the year 995, Elfric, archbishop of Canterbury, translated into English the Pentateuch, Joshua, Job, the Judges, Ruth, part of the books of Kings, Esther, and the Maccabees.†

The Bible was translated into Flemish, as Usher‡ admits, by Jacobus Merland, before the year 1210. This version was printed at Cologne in 1475, and passed through *seven* new editions before the appearance of Luther's Bible in 1530. The Antwerp edition was republished *eight* times in the short space of seventeen years. Within thirty years there were also published, at Antwerp alone, no less than *ten* editions of the New Testament translated by Cornelius Kendrick in 1524. In the course of the seventeenth century there appeared in Flanders new Catholic versions by De Wit, Laemput, Schum, and others. All these were repeatedly republished.

A Sclavonian version of the Bible was published at Cracow in the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the fourteenth century the Bible was translated into Swedish, by the direction of St. Bridget. According to the testimony of Jonas Arnagrimus, a disciple of the distinguished Tycho Brahe, a translation of the Bible was made

* The venerable Bede died in 735, immediately after having finished his translation of St. John's Gospel, which completed his version of the Scriptures.

† Cf. Bishop Kenrick's "Theologia Dogmatica," vol. i, p. 426.

‡ A learned Protestant historian, especially in regard to dates.

in Iceland as early as 1279. A Bohemian Bible appeared at Prague in 1488, and passed through three other different editions, at Cutna in 1498, and at Venice in 1506 and 1511.

Finally, to complete this hasty summary of facts, we may here state, as an evidence of the solicitude of Rome for the dissemination of the Bible, that many editions of Syriac and Arabic Bibles have been printed at Rome and Venice for the use of the oriental churches in communion with the Roman Catholic church. A translation of the Bible into Ethiopic was published at Rome as early as 1548. The famous convent of Armenian monks, called *Mechiteristi*, at Venice, so often visited by travellers, has published exquisitely beautiful versions of the Bible translated into Armenian.

From this mass of facts—and we have not given all that might be alleged on the subject—it clearly appears that the Catholic church had exhibited a most commendable zeal for the dissemination of the Scriptures among the people, long before the reformation had been heard of. This evidence of stubborn facts demonstrates how very silly are the assertions of those Protestant writers who, with M. D'Aubigné, would fain persuade the world that we are indebted to the reformation for the knowledge and general circulation of the Scriptures. And yet prejudice or drivelling ignorance will probably still continue to re-echo this unfounded assertion.

Before the appearance of Luther's version, in 1530, there had existed in the different countries of Europe at least *twenty-two* different Catholic versions, which, during the seventy years intervening between 1460 and 1530, had passed through at least SEVENTY editions, or one for each year!! And, simultaneously with Luther's Bible, there appeared a great number of other Catholic versions, all of which, as well as those previously in existence, were frequently reprinted. And yet, in the face of all these facts, we are still to be told that the Catholic church concealed the Bible!!

While on this subject, we may here remark that, of the four famous Polyglot Bibles, the three most ancient were published by Catholics. That by Cardinal Ximenes was published at Alcala in Spain, in six volumes, folio, in the year 1515, two years before the commencement of the reformation. That of Antwerp was published in 1572, and that of Paris in 1645; while the latest of all, and the only Protestant one, was published by Walton, in London, only in the year 1658.

We say nothing of another Polyglot edition of the Psalms, by Giustiniani, an Italian, who seems to have been the first to conceive this splendid idea of illustrating the sacred Scriptures by exhibiting, in parallel columns, the original Hebrew and Greek, with the most ancient and esteemed versions. His labor was, however, never destined to see the light; his manuscripts were lost in a shipwreck near Leghorn; and it was reserved to the magnificent Ximenes to be the first to carry out this great conception. He devoted many of the last years of his brilliant life to this great work. Valuable manuscripts in Greek and Hebrew were procured in remote places, and at immense expense: Ximenes himself collated them with the assistance of a body of learned men; and he finally put the finishing hand to his herculean labor. To him are we indebted for this first great impulse given to biblical criticism and literature.

It is also worthy of remark that a learned Italian, Bernardo de Rossi, towards the close of the last century, by his single, unaided efforts, collected together more valuable ancient Greek, and especially Hebrew, manuscripts of the Bible, than Walton had been able to do, with his immense resources and the co-operation of the British and of other governments.*

It is also proper to state that, besides the version of the Bible into the vernacular tongues of Europe referred to

* See Geddes' "Prospectus for a new translation," &c. 4to. Also the works of Bernardo de Rossi, who died quite recently.

above, there were, about the time of the reformation, various Latin versions made by Catholics immediately from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. These were entirely distinct from the Latin Vulgate of St. Jerome. The most famous were :—that by Santes Pagninus, published at Florence and Lyons in 1528, which was a translation from the Hebrew ; and that of the Old Testament by Cardinal Cajetan, which was a literal translation from the Septuagint.* It is also well known that Leo X, to promote biblical learning, established a professorship of Hebrew in Rome, at the very dawn of the reformation.

Thus every department of biblical study was extensively cultivated by the Catholic church, both before and after the commencement of the reformation. Catholic divines labored at least as much, and as successfully, in these studies, as did the reformers, and at a much more early period. Europe was filled with Bibles in almost every language, and especially in Latin and the vernacular tongues.

With all these facts before us, we will be able to form a correct judgment on the truth of the statement made by Martin Luther himself in his Table Talk. "Thirty years ago the Bible was an unknown book : the Prophets were not understood ; it was thought that they could not be translated. I was twenty years old before I saw the Scriptures: I thought that there was no other Gospel, no other Epistles than those contained in the Postilla."† He must either have been wondrously ignorant of what was every where passing around him in the world ; or he must have wilfully misstated the facts of the case. Either his character for knowledge or for veracity must suffer.

But we are still told that Catholics did not read the Bible—that they were even prohibited to do so—before the reformation. Who then purchased and read those

* Geddes, ibid.

† *Tisch Reden*, or Table Talk, p. 352, edit. Eisleben. Apud Audin, p. 390, 391.

seventy editions of the Bible in the vernacular tongues, which were published before Luther had circulated one copy of his German Bible? Were they read only by the priests? But these all knew Latin, and had their Latin Bibles. Think you that booksellers would have published so many editions of a book which was not readily sold, and extensively read? Would a new edition have been necessary each successive year, during the seventy which preceded the appearance of Luther's Bible, unless each edition, as it appeared, had been eagerly sought and bought up? Would any of our modern book publishers reprint seventy successive yearly editions of a work which was not generally read?

But there was a prohibition by the church to read the Bible. When, where, and by whom was that prohibition made? The annals of history are wholly silent as to any restriction of the kind having been made, before the flagrant abuses of the Bible by the reformers and their disciples seemed to require some such regulation. The church had indeed carefully guarded against the circulation of inaccurate editions; and the suppression of the Italian version by Bruccioli is an evidence of this wise solicitude. But we no where find evidence of any restrictive law as to the reading of the Bible in the vernacular versions, until after the council of Trent had closed its sessions in 1563.

A committee of learned divines, named by the council, drew up a list or index of prohibited books, prefaced by ten general regulations on the reading of them. The fourth rule of the Index permits the reading "of the Bible translated into the vulgar tongues by Catholic authors, to those only to whom the bishop or the inquisitor, with the advice of the parish priests or confessors, shall judge that such reading will prove more profitable unto an increase of faith and piety, than injurious:" and it assigns, as a reason for this restriction, "that experience had made it manifest that the permission to read the Bi-

ble indiscriminately in the vulgar tongues had, *from the rashness of men*, done more harm than good."*

Such a disciplinary regulation was then deemed necessary when the landmarks of the ancient faith had been recklessly removed, and the Bible was wantonly perverted to support a hundred contradictory systems. In that period of religious vertigo, men, "having an appearance indeed of piety, but denying the power thereof," were "always learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth:"† "according to their own devices, they heaped up to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they turned away their hearing from the truth, and were turned to fables:"‡ they "were like children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive:"§ and not understanding that in the Scriptures "are some things hard to be understood," they "wrested them to their own perdition."‖ In this emergency, when the very substance of the faith was endangered, did it not behoove the church, "which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,"¶ to raise her warning voice, and to proclaim from the chair of Peter, with St. Peter himself, that all should "understand this *first*, that no prophecy of the Scripture is made by private interpretation;"** and to re-echo through the religious world, thus shaken to its base, the solemn command of Christ "to hear the church," under the penalty of being reckoned "with heathens and publicans?"††

This is precisely what the church did; and she thought that she was compelled to this course by the sad "expe-

* "Cum experimento manifestum sit, si sacra biblia vulgari linguâ passim sine discrimine permittantur, plus inde, ob hominum temeritatem, detrimenti quam utilitatis orri." Regula IV.

† 2 Tim. iii, 5—7. ‡ Ibid. iv, 3, 4. § Ephes. iv, 14.
‖ 2 Peter iii, 6. ¶ 1 Tim. iii, 15. ** 2 Peter i, 20.
†† Matth. xviii, 17.

rience" of the evil workings of the newly broached principle of private interpretation. "It was not her fault, but the fault of the times:" the "rashness of men" perverting the Scriptures of God to their own perdition, was the cause of her enactment restricting the reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongues. The principle of private interpretation, applied to the Scriptures, had evidently "done more harm than good;" for, whereas the Bible manifestly contains and teaches but one religion, this principle had extracted from it at least a hundred contradictory ones; and therefore it had obviously done at least ninety-nine times "as much harm as good." So that the reformation is alone to be blamed for this restrictive policy on the part of the Catholic church; and Protestants should be the last persons in the world to reproach to her as a fault, what the "rashness" alone of their fathers in the faith occasioned.

But the enactment in question, besides not emanating from the council itself, it having been made after the council had closed its sessions, contained a mere disciplinary regulation, which was not every where received,* and which has long since ceased to be of binding force in any part of the Catholic church. The present discipline requires only "that the version be approved, and illustrated by commentaries from the fathers and other Catholic writers."† Pope Pius VI, in a letter‡ to Anthony Martini, the translator of the Italian version, now generally used in Italy, praises him for his undertaking, and adds: "for these (the Scriptures) are the most abundant sources, *which ought to be left open to every one*, to draw from them purity of morals and of doctrine."§

* "Sed ea disciplina non ubique obtinuit." Bp. Kenrick, Theol. Dogmatica, vol. i, p. 429. In this learned and excellent work will be found many valuable facts, of which we have already availed ourselves, and on which we shall occasionally draw in the sequel. † Ibid.

‡ Written April 1, 1778.

§ Inserted in frontispiece of the Doway Bible.

It is then plainly a slander to assert that the Catholic church forbids the reading of the Scriptures. In the United States, Catholics have published at least as many editions of the Bible as any Protestant sect. These have appeared in every form, from Haydock's splendid folio Bible, in two volumes—an edition unequalled by any Protestant Bible in the country—down to the octavo and duodecimo editions. Several of these have been stereotyped: and they may be had in every Catholic book store in the country, and may be found in most Catholic families. In France, the great Bossuet distributed himself no less than fifty thousand copies of the New Testament translated into French by Amelotte."*

In speaking of the influence of the reformation on biblical learning, we must say a few words—our limits will allow but few—on the different Protestant versions. These are as numerous, and almost as various, as the sects from which they have emanated. The oldest is that of Luther, in which, as soon as it appeared, the learned Emser detected no less than a thousand glaring faults! Luther became angry, and raged at this exposure of his work by his learned antagonist, on whom he exhausted his vocabulary of abusive epithets. He said, among other pretty things, that "these popish asses were not able to appreciate his labors."† Yet Seckendorf informs us that, in his cooler moments, he availed himself of Emser's corrections, and made many changes in his version.‡

Still, however, Martin Bucer, a brother reformer, says that "his falls in translating and explaining the Scriptures were manifest and not a few."§ Zuingle, another leading reformer, after having examined it, openly pronounced it a corruption of the word of God.‖ It has now

* Robelot, Influence, &c. p. 389.

† Seckendorf, Comm. l. i, sect. 52, § cxxvii, p. 210. ‡ Ib. § cxxii.

§ "*Lutheri lapsus in vertendis et explanandis Scripturis manifestos esse et non paucos.*" Bucer Dial. contra Melancthon.

‖ See Amicable Discussion, i, 129, note.

grown obsolete even in Germany. It is viewed as faulty and insufficient in many respects. In 1836, many Lutheran consistories called for its entire revision.*

We might also show that the translations made by the other leading reformers were not more unexceptionable. Luther returned with interest the compliment which Zuingle had paid to his Bible. "Œcolampadius and the theologians of Basle made another version; but, according to the famous Beza, it was impious in many parts: the divines of Basle said the same of Beza's version. In fact, adds Dumoulin, another learned minister, "he changes in it the text of Scripture;" and speaking of Calvin's translation, he says that "Calvin does violence to the letter of the Gospel, which he has changed, making also additions of his own. The ministers of Geneva believed themselves obliged to make an exact version; but James I, king of England, in his conference at Hampton court, declared that, of all the versions, it was the most wicked and unfaithful."†

It is very difficult for men who have their own peculiar religious notions to subserve, to translate fairly the sacred text. An example of this is found in the manifestly sectarian rendering of the words *baptism* and *baptize*, by *immersion* and *immerse*, in the New Testament translated by George Cambell, James Mc'Knight and Philip Doddridge, and now extensively used by the new sect—which is

* See Audin, p. 215, for many authorities on this subject. Of Luther's version Mr. Hallam says: "The translation of the Old and New Testament by Luther is more renowned for the purity of its German idiom, than for its adherence to the original text. Simon has charged him with ignorance of Hebrew; and when we consider how late he came to the knowledge of that or the Greek language, and the multiplicity of his employments, it may be believed that his knowledge of them was far from extensive." Hist. Literat. i, 201. And in a note (ibid.) he says: "It has been as ill spoken of among Calvinists as by the Catholics themselves. St. Aldegonde says it is farther from the Hebrew than any he knows." See Gerdes Hist. Ref. Evang. iii, 60.

† Bishop Trevern. Amic. Discussion, i, 127, note. All these facts and many more can be easily substantiated.

greatly spreading through the western country—called reformers or Cambellites. We say nothing here of the gross perversion of the last verse of St. Matthew's Gospel, in this version.

The version of king James, on its first appearance in England, was openly decried by the Protestant ministers, as abounding in gross perversions of the original text.* The necessity of this new translation, was predicated on the notorious corruptions of the sacred text by all the Protestant versions in England during the previous seventy years. The chief of these were: Tyndale's, Mathews,' Cranmer's, and the bishops' Bible.† Here then is an open avowal, that during all this time, when Protestantism was in its palmiest days in England, it had not offered to the people the pure word of God!

And, as we have just seen, king James' version did not much mend the matter. It was however repeatedly corrected: but even in its amended forms, as now used by most English and American Protestants, it still abounds with grievous faults. Mr. Ward, in his *Errata*, has pointed out a great number: though candor compels us to avow, that this writer is not always judicious in his criticism, and that he frequently insists too much on mere trifles. Bishop Kenrick, in his Theology, proves by a reference to the original text, as edited even by Protestants, that the modern English version still retains at least five

* After speaking rather disparagingly of the English style of king James' version, Mr. Hallam very *cautiously* abstains from venturing an opinion on its fidelity. "On the more important question, whether this translation is entirely, or with very trifling exceptions, conformable to the original text, it seems unfit to enter. It is one which is seldom discussed with all the temper and freedom from oblique views which the subject demands, and upon which, for this reason, it is not safe for those who have not had leisure or means to examine for themselves, to take upon trust the testimony of the learned." Hist. Literat. *sup. cit.* ii, 59. This silence is ominous in a learned English Protestant.

† For an account of these see Hallam.—Hist. Lit. I, 201.

or six grievous perversions of the text, in matters too, affecting doctrine.*

The English Doway version, which is in general use among English and American Catholics, is a translation from the Latin vulgate, which was rendered from the original Hebrew and Greek by St. Jerome, towards the close of the fourth century. Dating from a time preceding by many hundred years the religious prejudices which influenced Christians for the last three hundred years, the vulgate is deservedly esteemed for its accuracy and impartiality, even by intelligent Protestant writers. St. Jerome had access to many valuable manuscripts which have since perished. Since his time the Hebrew has undergone a revolution by the introduction of the Massoretic points, to supply the place of vowels, which were wanting in the old Hebrew language.

The distinguished Protestant biblical critic, George Cambell states these advantages of St. Jerome's position, and fully admits their force.† He also says of his version: "The vulgate may be pronounced on the whole a good and faithful version."‡ Another famous modern Protestant writer on biblical studies, says of it: "It is allowed to be in general a faithful translation, and sometimes exhibits the sense of Scripture with greater accuracy than the more modern versions. . . . . The Latin vulgate preserves many true readings, where the modern Hebrew copies are corrupted."§ A writer, whose biblical "Insti-

* *Theologia Dogmatica*, vol. 1, p. 427, seqq. Among these facts, the most glaring are these: Matth. xix, 11th, "All men *cannot receive* this saying," for "*receive not*"—Greek, *χωροῦσι* : I Corinth. vii, 9. "If they *cannot* contain," for *do not contain*—Gr. *ἐγκρατεύονται*; 1 Cor. ix, 5. "Have we not power to lead about a sister, *a wife*," for a *woman, a sister*. Gr. *ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα*; 1 Cor. xi, 27.—"Eat this bread *and* drink" &c., for *or* drink—Gr. *ἤ*, &c. &c.

† Dissert. tom. x. p. 354, Amer. edit. apud Bp. Kenrick.—*Theol. Dog.* i, p. 424.

‡ Ibid. p. 358. *apud eundem*.

§ Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, part i, ch. v. § 1, p. 281, 202. Apud Bp. Kenrick ibid. p. 423.

tutes" are often used as a text book in this country, says: "it is in general skilful and faithful, and often gives the sense of Scripture better than modern versions."*

Thus Protestants did not at least, even according to their own showing, make much of a reformation in the Bible, when they departed from that "faithful" translation,—the old Latin vulgate; and gave us in its place their many crude and grossly faulty versions of the Bible. But did they succeed better in expounding, than they had in translating the Bible? They have at least been prolific in this *genre:* they have given us almost as many interpretations as they have heads. We could scarcely have asked for more variety.

Nor is the work of improving on the previously ascertained meanings of the Bible yet completed: almost every day we hear of learned and intelligent preachers among Protestants, striking new systems out of this good book—they certainly are *out* of it. One,† by a new method calculates to a nicety the very year and day when all prophecy is to be fulfilled, and the world is to come to an end: another,‡ pretending that all Protestant sects have hitherto been in the dark as to the real meaning of the Bible, proposes that all creeds and commentaries be cast to the winds, and that every one hereafter explain it simply as it reads: that is, as he *thinks* it reads. This last system, though it is based on the real Protestant principle of private interpretation, to the exclusion of all church authority, is one eminenly calculated to multiply sects, and to render confusion worse confounded.

Let us see in conclusion, what has been the practical operation of this principle of private interpretation, and what the general influence of the reformation on biblical studies in Germany, the first theatre of Protestantism. Has it been salutary or injurious? It requires but little

* Gerard Institutes of biblical criticism. § iv, p. 269, 270. Apud eundem ibid.

† Miller. ‡ Alexander Cambell.

acquaintance with the present condition of German Protestantism, to be able to pronounce on its character and tendency. Rationalism is there in the ascendant. This system, which is little better than downright Deism, has frittered away the very substance of Christianity. The inspiration of the Bible itself, the integrity of its canon, the truth of its numerous and clearly attested miracles, the divinity and even the resurrection of Christ, and the existence of grace, and of every thing supernatural in religion—have all fallen before the Juggernaut car of modern German Protestant *exegesis*—or system of interpretation! The Rationalists of Germany have left nothing of Christianity—not even its skeleton! They boldly and unblushingly proclaim their infidel principles, through the press, from the professor's chair, and the pulpit. And the most learned and distinguished among the present German Protestant clergy, have openly embraced this system. Whoever doubts the entire accuracy of this picture of modern German Protestantism, needs only open the works of Semmler, Damon, Paul, Strauss, Eichorn, Michaelis, Bretschneider, Woltman, and others.

The following extract from the sermons of the Rev. Mr. Rose, a divine of the church of England, and "Christian advocate of the university of Cambridge," gives a graphic sketch of these German Rationalists. "They are bound by no law, but their own fancies; some are more and some are less extravagant: but I do them no injustice after this declaration in saying, that the general inclination and tendency of their opinions (more or less forcibly acted on) is this:—that in the New Testament, we shall find only the *opinions* of Christ and the apostles adapted to the age in which they lived, and not eternal truths; that Christ himself had neither the design nor the power of teaching any system which was to endure; that, when he taught any enduring truth, as he occasionally did, it was without being aware of its nature; that the apostles understood still less of real religion; that the whole doctrine both of

Christ and the apostles, as it was directed to the Jews alone, so it was gathered from no other source than the Jewish philosophy; that Christ himself erred, and his apostles spread his errors, and that consequently no one of his doctrines is to be received on their authority; but that, without regard to the authority of the books of Scripture, and their asserted divine origin, each doctrine is to be examined according to the principles of right reason, before it is allowed to be divine."

We should be endless were we to attempt to give all the extravagances into which these German Protestant divines have indulged: yet we must give a few of the most glaring. Doctor Paul, in his Scripture Commentaries, enters into a labored argument to prove that Christ was not really dead, but that he had merely suffered a fainting fit, from which he was recovered by the admission of fresh air into his sepulchre. He moves heaven and earth to prove that no instance is on record of a man dying on a cross in three hours!! He indulges in similar absurdities about the resurrection of Lazarus.

When Christ is said to have walked on the sea, it is no miracle at all, says Doctor Paul: for the Greek word *may* mean only that he walked *by* the sea, or simply that he *swam:* and St. Peter's having been on the point of drowning, resulted merely from the circumstance that he was not so expert a swimmer as Christ!! Most of the cures spoken of in the Gospel, the Rationalists explain by the superior skill in medicine, which they have ascertained, our Saviour learned during his infancy, while an exile in Egypt; or they account for them, by Dr. Mesmer's newly invented system of animal magnetism!

According to them, St. John did not really write the Gospel ascribed to him; and as for the other three Gospels, they are a mere clumsy compilation from a previous common record, the existence of which they have detected, and which they assert was written in the Aramaic language!! This discovery, made first by the learned Mi-

chaellis, was improved on by Berthold and others, who maintained, that not only the Gospels, but the Epistles of St. Paul and the other Epistles also, are mere faulty translations from the original Aramaic!! Thus, "instead of the good old-fashioned notion, that the New Testament is a collection of works composed by the persons whose names they bear, and who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we must now believe that the original narrator of the Gospel History was an unknown person; and that the Gospels and Epistles are merely translations made by some persons whose names are lost, and who betray themselves by several blunders in the work which they undertook."* At least all these explanations are *natural* enough: and those who maintain them accordingly style themselves *naturalists*, as well as Rationalists.

Such then are the effects—present and palpable—of the reformation on the biblical literature of Germany! The reformation began by vaunting its zeal for the Bible: and it has ended, in the very place of its birth, by rejecting the Bible, and by blaspheming Christ and his religion!

Its results have not been more favorable to Christianity in Geneva, another centre of the reformation, and another radiating point of the new Gospel. Hear what the Protestant writer Grenus says on this subject. "The ministers of Geneva have already passed the unchangeable barrier. They have held out the hand of fellowship to deists and to the enemies of the faith. They even blush to make mention, in their catechisms, of original sin, without which the incarnation of the Eternal Word is no longer necessary." "When asked," says Rousseau, "if Jesus Christ is God, they do not dare to answer. When asked, what mysteries they admit, they still do not dare to answer. . . . . A philosopher casts on them a rapid glance, and penetrates

* British Critic, July, 1828. See also Dr. Pusey's "Historical Inquiry;" and also Moore's "Travels of an Irish Gentleman," &c. p. 186, seqq., where this whole subject is ably and fully elucidated.

them at once—he sees they are Arians, Socinians."* He wrote from personal observation, made during a residence in Geneva. Recent travellers have confirmed his statement.

The following epigram expresses pretty accurately the confession of faith adopted by modern German Protestants.

> "We now reject each mystic creed,
> To common sense a scandal;
> We're more enlightened—yes indeed,
> The devil holds the candle!"

If Luther may be credited, the old gentleman—Luther called him a *gentleman*—"held the candle" at the birth; and we see no reason why he should not hold it at the funeral of German Protestantism!

* "Lettres de la Montagne."

Part IV.

INFLUENCE

OF THE

REFORMATION ON SOCIETY.

CHAPTER XI.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Stating the question—Two aspects — Professions — M. D'Aubigné's theory—"Combating" *ad libitum*—Diversities and sects—Inconsistency—Early Protestant intolerance—The mother and her recreant daughter—Facts on persecution of each other by early Protestants—Of Karlstadt—Luther the cause of it—Persecution of Anabaptists—Synod at Hamburg—Luther's letter—Zuingle—The drowned Jew—Calvinistic intolerance—Persecution of Catholics — Diet of Spires —Name of *Protestant*—A stubborn truth—Strange casuistry—Convention at Smalkalde—Inquisition and St. Bartholomew's day—The *Michelade*, a set-off—Union of church and state—A bear's embrace—Hallam's testimony—Parallel between Catholic and Protestant countries.

We have seen what was the influence of the boasted reformation on religion: we are now to examine how it affected the interests of this world. Among these, liberty is the one which is perhaps dearest to the human heart. The very name excites a thrill, and stirs the deepest feelings of the soul. Did the reformation promote liberty? Did it break the fetters of political bondage, and did it favor freedom of conscience? Were those who came within the range of its influence rendered more free, either religiously or politically, than they had been before?

The question presents two aspects; and we begin with that which is religious, both because this involves higher interests, and because it forms the natural point of transition from the merely religious and spiritual to the merely secular and temporal influence of the reformation. Religious liberty guarantees to every man the right to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, without thereby incurring any civil penalties or disabilities whatever. Did the reformation secure this? We shall see. A summary collection of the facts of history bearing on the subject will settle the question.

The reformation indeed boasted much on this subject. It professed to free mankind from the degrading yoke of the papacy, and to restore to them their Christian liberty. Men were told that they who professed the old religion were groaning under a worse than Babylonian captivity, and that those who would rally under the banner of reform would be brought back into the land of Israel, there to worship in freedom and in peace near the Sion of God. The pope was Antichrist; the church was ruthlessly trampled under foot by his ministers; the liberties of the world were crushed. And mankind were invited to arise in their strength, to break their chains, and to be free! The restraining influence of church authority was to be spurned as wholly incompatible with freedom, and each one was to be guided solely by his own private judgment in matters of religion.

The Germans were told of the grievances they had to endure in ages past from the court of Rome. Angry passions, once excited by long forgotten controversies between the Germanic empire and the Roman pontiffs, were called up again from the abyss in which they had slumbered for centuries; and the Germans were implored, in the talismanic name of liberty, to break off all connection with Rome for ever. In case they would do this, the reformation promised that they should realize the brightest visions of freedom.

Such was the specious theory of the reformation; such the boasting speculation of Protestant writers generally. M. Guizot, in his Lectures on Civilization in Modern Europe, asserts that through the reformation was brought about "the emancipation of the human mind." According to M. D'Aubigné, the Catholic church had utterly destroyed all human liberty. "But as a besieging army day by day contracts its lines, compelling the garrison to confine their movements within the narrow enclosure of the fortress, and at last obliging it to surrender at discretion, just so the hierarchy, from age to age, and almost from year to year, has gone on restricting the liberty allowed for a time to the human mind, until at last, by successive encroachments, there remained no liberty at all. That which was to be believed, loved, or done, was regulated and decreed in the courts of the Roman chancery. The faithful were relieved from the trouble of examining, reflecting, and combating; all they had to do was to repeat the formularies that had been taught them."*

This is all, to say the least, an absurd exaggeration, a grotesque romance, not even borrowed from real life. What! were men then, for fifteen hundred years, mere automatons? Did the obedience to the decisions of the church stifle all rational liberty? Had not Christ enjoined this obedience on all under penalty of being ranked with heathens and publicans?† Did Christ and the apostles leave it free to men to decide, by their private judgment, whether they would receive or reject the doctrines they taught? And in enjoining obedience on all, with the menace of eternal damnation to him that would not believe,‡ did they crush all liberty? Might not our historian also taunt *their* practice with being inimical to freedom, on the ground that it "relieved the faithful from the trouble of examining, reflecting, and combating?"

In what consists the difference between the authorita-

* D'Aubigné, iii, 237. † Matth. xviii. ‡ Mark xvi.

tive teaching of the first body of Christ's ministers, the apostles and that of the body of pastors who, by divine commission, succeeded them in the office of preaching, teaching, and baptizing, and who, in the discharge of these sacred duties, were promised the divine assistance "all days, even to the consummation of the world?"* And if the latter was opposed to rational liberty, why was not the former? Besides, we learn, for the first time, that the Roman chancery decided on articles of faith: we had always thought that this was the exclusive province of general councils, and, when these were not in session, of Roman pontiffs with the acquiescence of the body of bishops dispersed over the world. We had also thought that even these did not always decide on controverted points, but only in cases in which the teaching of revelation was clear and explicit; and that, in other matters, they wisely allowed a reasonable latitude of opinion. But M. D'Aubigné would have us believe that Roman Catholics are bound hand and foot, body and soul, and that they are not allowed even to reflect!

They were certainly not allowed to "combat:" this was the special privilege of the reformed party. The old church wisely ordained that all the "combating" should take place, if at all, without her pale: she would permit no wrangling nor sects within her bosom. It is indeed curious to observe how M. D'Aubigné boasts of this privilege of wrangling among discordant sects as the very quintessence of Christian liberty! This precious liberty could not be enjoyed so long as a recognition of the principle of church authority held the religious world in unity; the reformers therefore determined to burst this bondage of union, and to assert their freedom to "combat" *ad libitum!*

"The reformation," he says, "in restoring liberty to the church, must therefore restore to it its original diver-

* Matth. xxviii.

sity (!), and people it with families united by the great features of resemblance derived from their common head, but varying in secondary features, and reminding us of the varieties inherent in human nature. Perhaps it might have been desirable that this diversity should have been allowed to subsist in the universal church without leading to sectarian divisions; and yet we must remember that *sects* are only the expression of this diversity."* Humiliating avowal! Sects are therefore as essential features in Protestantism, as are the "diversities" of which they are but the expression! And all this is essential to that Christian liberty for which the world is indebted to the "glorious reformation!" St. Paul, a competent authority, reckons *sects* and *dissensions* with *murders* and *drunkenness;* and says of all of them that "they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God."† Thus, according to our historian, an essential feature of Christian liberty, is an essential bar to entrance into the kingdom of heaven! The reformation is welcome to all the merit of having originated such a system of liberty! As well might its panegyrist have claimed for it, as essential to the liberty which it brought into the world, a license for *murders* and *drunkenness.*

A little farther on, he thus glories in the shame of Protestantism. "True it is, that human passion found an entrance into these discussions (*among Protestant sects*), but while deploring such minglings of evil, Protestantism, far from seeking to disguise the diversity, publishes and proclaims it. Its path to unity is indeed long and difficult, but the unity it proposes is *real*."‡ Real in what? Is there one common ground of unity which Protestantism has not recklessly trodden down and rendered desolate? Truly its path to unity "has been long and difficult." During three hundred years, this tortuous path has been seen winding in more than a hundred different directions, and it has not yet led the weary wanderer to unity!

* Ibid. p. 238. † Gallatians v, 20, 21. ‡ Ibid. p. 238.

It has done precisely the contrary. It is a strange path to unity, truly, which has always led to disunion. "Diversities and sects" have multiplied, and grown with the growth of Protestantism: they are avowedly its "essential features." There is scarcely one saving truth of revelation which Protestantism, in its ever downward career, has not frittered away. And yet we are to be told, that "the unity which it *proposed* was real." If such was the case, it certainly never carried into effect what it had *proposed*.

The only principle of unity possible among Protestants, is an agreement to disagree. But we are prepared to prove, that they were not disposed to meet even on this slippery ground of union. One would have thought, that when the reformation emancipated its disciples from the duty of obedience to Rome, and proclaimed the principle of private judgment as the broad basis—the *magna charta*—of the new system of Christian liberty, that it would at least have guaranteed to them freedom of thought and judgment in matters of religion. Surely after having indignantly rejected the principle of church authority, as incompatible with liberty, Protestantism would not attempt to enthrone again this self same principle, and to impose it as an obligation on its own followers.

Yet this course, absurd and inconsistent as it was on the very face of it, was the very one adopted, *without an exception*, by the numerous sects to which the reformation gave birth! If there be any truth in history, the reformers themselves were the most intolerant of men, not only towards the Catholic church, but towards each other. They could not brook dissent from the crude notions on religion which they had broached. Men might protest against the decisions of the Catholic church; but wo to them, if, following their own private judgment, they *dared* protest against the self-constituted authority of the new-fangled Protestant sects. We have already given many proofs of this: but we here beg leave to submit the follow-

ing additional facts. And we will allege little but Protestant authority, and the testimony of the reformers themselves.

Mr. Roscoe, whose pen has so glowingly depicted the bright literary age of Leo X, justly censures "the severity with which Luther treated those, who unfortunately happened to believe too much on the one hand, or too little on the other, and could not walk steadily on the hair-breadth line which he had presented." He also makes this appropriate remark on the same feature of inconsistency: "whilst Luther was engaged in his opposition to the church of Rome, he asserted the right of private judgment with the confidence and courage of a martyr. But no sooner had he freed his followers from the chains of papal domination, than he forged others in many respects equally intolerable; and it was the employment of his latter years, to counteract the beneficial effects produced by his former labors."*

The tyrannical and intolerant character of Luther, the father of the reformation, is in fact admitted by all candid Protestants. We have already seen the testimony which his most favored disciple, Melancthon, bears to his brutal conduct even towards himself, whenever he timidly ventured to differ from him in opinion. The vile state of bondage in which the fierce reformer held his meek disciple is thus graphically painted in a confidential letter of Melancthon to his friend Camerarius: "I am in a state of servitude, as if I were in the cave of the Cyclops: and often do I think of making my escape."† Even Dr. Sturges, a most inveterate enemy of Rome, grants that "Luther was, in his manners and writings, coarse, presuming, and impetuous."‡

The other reformers were little better than Luther in regard to charity and toleration. The Protestant bishop

* "Life and Pontificate of Leo X," 4 vols. 8vo.

† Epist. ad Camerarium.

‡ Reflections on Popery.

Warburton, gives the following character of all of them. "The other reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, and their followers, understood so little in what true Christianity consisted, that they carried with them into the reformed churches, that very spirit of persecution (!) which had driven them from the church of Rome."* As we shall soon see, the recreant daughters of Rome far outstripped their mother in intolerance. We have already proved, that it was not persecution, but other causes altogether, which drove them from Rome, and consummated their schism. Rome had indeed been inflexible on the subject of doctrines, upon which she could allow no compromise; but she proceeded towards the reformers with so much mildness and moderation, as to have secured the admiration of even M. D'Aubigné, whose testimony on the subject we have already given. So far was she from persecuting them, that many Catholic writers have blamed as excessive and injudicious, the mildness of her pontiffs, and especially of Leo X, and Adrian VI.

From an early period of its history, the reformation was disgraced with the crime of persecution for conscience' sake. The oldest branch of it, the Lutheran, not only fiercely denounced, and even sometimes excluded from salvation, the reformed or Calvinistic branch; but it also endeavored to check by violence the fierce discord which raged within its own bosom. A learned Lutheran professor, Dr. Fecht, gives it as the opinion of his sect, "that all but Lutherans, and *certainly* all the reformed Calvinists were excluded from salvation."† The Lutheran Strigel was imprisoned for three years by his brother religionists, for maintaining that man was not merely passive in the work of his conversion. Hardenburg was banished from Saxony for having been guilty of some leaning towards the Calvinistic doctrines on the eucharist. Shortly

* Notes on Pope's Essay on Criticism.

† See Dr. Pusey's "Historical Inquiry," sup. cit.

after Luther's death, the Lutherans were divided into two great sects, the ultra Lutherans and the Melancthonians, who mutually denounced each other, and even refused to unite in the rites of communion and burial. So far was the intolerance growing out of this controversy carried, that Peucer, Melancthon's son-in-law, was imprisoned for ten years, for having espoused the party of his father-in-law: and Cracau, another Lutheran, was plied with the torture for a similar offence! Besides these two great Lutheran sects, there were also the Flaccianists and the Strigelians—the Osiandrians and the Stancarians—and many others, who persecuted each other with relentless fury. Lutheranism was thus, from its very birth, a prey to the fiercest dissensions. Verily, they claimed and exercised the liberty of "combating," so essential, according to M. D'Aubigné, to the Protestant theory of religious liberty.*

The first who dared question the infallibility of Luther was the first to feel the heavy weight of his intolerant vengeance. Andrew Bodenstein, more generally known by the name of Karlstadt, could not agree with him as to the lawfulness of images, on the real presence, on infant baptism, and on some other topics. He had reached different conclusions, by following his own private judgment in expounding the Scriptures. During Luther's absence from Wittemberg, he had sought to make proselytes to his new opinions in the very citadel of the reformation. Luther caused him to be driven from Wittemberg, and hunted him down with implacable resentment, driving him from city to city of Germany; till at last the unfortunate victim of his intolerance expired a miserable outcast at Basle in Switzerland.

When Karlstadt first left Wittemberg, he fled to Orlamunde, a city of Saxony, in which he succeeded by in-

* For more on this subject, see the authorities quoted by Moore.—"Travels of an Irish Gentleman," p. 172, seqq., and 192, seqq.

trigue in obtaining the place of pastor. Luther followed him thither; and finding, as we have already seen, that he could not succeed in having him ejected from the city by popular clamor, he prevailed on his powerful patron, the Elector of Saxony, to banish him from Saxony. Karlstadt received the sentence of his condemnation with a heavy heart: "he looked on Luther as the author of his disgrace, and filled Germany with his complaints and lamentations. He wrote a farewell letter to his friends at Orlamunde. The bells were tolled, and the letter read in the presence of the sorrowing church. It was signed: 'Andrew Bodenstein, expelled by Luther, unconvicted, and without even a hearing.'"*

It is in vain for M. D'Aubigné, whose words we have just cited, to pretend that this persecution of Karlstadt was not brought about by Luther.† The testimony of Karlstadt, and of all Germany, to the sympathy of which he appealed, as well as the voice of all history, is against this hypothesis. So certain was it, that he owed his sufferings to the influence of Luther with the Elector of Saxony, that, when wearied of his wanderings from city to city, he sought repose for his gray hairs in his native Saxony, he had only to invoke the sympathy of Luther. The sternness of the Saxon monk relented: he permitted Karlstadt to return to the neighborhood of Wittemberg; but only on condition that he should retract his errors, and cease to preach.‡ Karlstadt joyfully accepted the humiliating conditions: he resided for some time "in a kind of domestic exile at Remberg and Bergwitz—two small villages, whence he could just see the steeples of Wittemberg."§ But he soon forgot his promise: he abandoned the agricultural pursuits in which he had been engaged,

* D'Aubigné iii, 179. He cites Luther's Epist. ii, 558, edit. de Wette.

† Ibid.

‡ Gustavus Pfizer—"Martin Luther's Leiben," Ulenberg—and Ad. Menzel—"Neuere Geschichte der Deutchen" 1, 269.

§ Audin, p. 419.

and, Bible in hand, sought again to disseminate his doctrines. Luther's spirit of intolerance was again aroused; and again was Karlstadt banished, never more to return to Wittemberg!

There were two other Lutheran theologians who shared his fate: Krautwald and Schwenkfeld, who were likewise forced to quit Saxony for having rebelled against the authority of the Saxon monk. In a letter to these companions in misfortune, Karlstadt draws a lively picture of the distress to which he had been reduced by the intolerance of Luther: "I shall soon be forced," says he, "to sell all, in order to support myself—my clothes, my delf, all my furniture. No one takes pity on me; and I fear that both I and my child shall perish with hunger."* He also addressed a long letter of complaint against Luther, to Brück, the Chancellor of Saxony:† but it was all unavailing: Luther was omnipotent at court, and Karlstadt perished in exile. Why does M. D'Aubigné conceal all these important facts? We are not astonished at it: his whole history is of the same unfair and partial character throughout. In fact, our chief object in writing this review is to supply his manifold omissions.

The cruel persecutions of the Anabaptists is another dark page in the history of the reformation. To be sure, these sectarists taught many things subversive of all social order: such as polygamy and disobedience to all constituted authority. But their chief crimes, in the eyes of Luther and the reformers, were their rejection of Luther's authority, their pretensions to supernatural lights, and their protest against infant baptism, and baptism by any other mode than immersion. A little before the meeting of the Diet at Augsburg in 1534, Rothmann, one of their principal prophets, had openly announced his principles in the streets of the city. The people were captivated by his bold eloquence, and seduced by the novelty of his doc-

* Apud Audin, p. 420. † Ibid.

trines. In vain did the preachers of reform attempt to argue with this enthusiast, who claimed immediate inspiration from heaven. The people cried out, in triumph; "answer Rothmann: Catholics, Lutherans, Zuinglians—you are all in the way of perdition. The only path to heaven is that pointed out by our master: whoever walks not in it, will be involved in eternal darkness."*

But the Lutherans did not think proper to answer his arguments. Both he and the Zuinglians had prepared a confession of faith to be presented to the Diet. Luther and Melancthon succeeded by their influence in preventing them from being even heard at the Diet. The former wrote to the latter from Coburg in a tone of triumph: "that all was decided; that the doctrine of Zuingle and of Rothmann was diabolical; and that these sowers of discord, these ravenous wolves, who devastated the fold of Christ, should be banished."† At that same Diet, the Lutherans sought for themselves, not only liberty of conscience, but churches to worship in, and all the privileges of citizenship; and still they would not allow their adversaries even to be heard! And yet, as M. Audin well remarks, "Rothmann at Augsburg, was precisely what Luther had been at Worms"‡

The Lutherans carried out their intolerant principles in regard to the Anabaptists. On the 7th of August, 1536, a synod was convened at Hamburg, to which deputies were sent by all the cities who had separated from Rome. The chief object of the meeting was to devise means for exterminating the Anabaptists. Not one voice was raised in their favor. Even Melancthon, whom M. Audin styles "the Fenelon of the reformation," voted for inflicting the punishment of death on every Anabaptist who would remain obstinate in his errors, or would dare return from

* See Catrou—Histoire de l'Anabaptisme, and Audin, p. 459.

† Apud Audin, *Ibid.* See the authorities he quotes, *Ibid.*

‡ P. 460.

the place of banishment to which the magistrates might transport him. Fenelon would not have been thus intolerant. "The ministers of Ulm demanded that heresy should be extinguished by fire and sword. Those of Augsburg said: 'if we have not yet sent any Anabaptist to the gibbet, we have at least branded their cheeks with red iron.' Those of Tubingen cried out 'mercy for the poor Anabaptists, who are seduced by their leaders; but death to the ministers of this sect. The chancellor showed himself much more tolerant: he wished that the Anabaptists should be imprisoned, where by dint of hard usage, they might be converted."*

From the Synod emanated a decree, from which we will present the following extract, as a specimen of Lutheran intolerance officially proclaimed. "Whoever rejects infant baptism—whoever transgresses the orders of the magistrates—whoever preaches against taxes—whoever teaches the community of goods—whoever usurps the priesthood—whoever holds unlawful assemblies—whoever sins against faith—*shall be punished with death.* . . . As for the simple people who have not preached, or administered baptism, but who were seduced to permit themselves to frequent the assemblies of the heretics, if they do not wish to renounce Anabaptism, they shall be scourged, punished with perpetual exile, and even with *death*, if they return three times to the place whence they have been expelled."†

Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, professed to have some scruples of conscience (!) on the severity of this decree: he consulted Luther on the subject. The monk answered him in a letter dated from Wittemberg, the Monday after Pentecost of the same year. He openly defends persecution on Scriptural grounds: "whoever denies the doctrines

* Catrou ut supra liv. 1, p. 224, seqq., and Audin, p. 464.

† Ibid. See also Gastius, p. 365, seqq. Menzel ut supra, and Meshovius, l. v, cap. xv, xviii, seqq., &c.

of our faith—aye, even one article which rests on the Scripture, or the authority of the universal teaching of the church (!), must be punished severely. He must be treated not only as a heretic, but also as a blasphemer of the holy name of God. It is not necessary to lose time in disputes with such people: they are to be condemned as impious blasphemers." Towards the close of his letter, speaking of a false teacher, he says: "drive him away, as an apostle of hell: and if he does not flee, deliver him up as a seditious man to the executioner."* The Landgrave's scruples were quieted, and Luther's advice was acted on.

Such then were the tender mercies of the reformation! Such the notions of the reformers on religious liberty! How different from those specious principles of universal liberty by which they had allured multitudes to their standard!

The other reformers were not a whit better than Luther in regard to toleration. M. D'Aubigné himself says, that at Zurich fourteen men and seven women "were imprisoned on an allowance of bread and water in the heretics' tower."† True, he says, that this was done "in spite of Zuingle's entreaties;"‡ but he gives no authority whatever for this statement. We know that Zuingle was almost omnipotent at Zurich, which was to Switzerland, what Wittemberg was to Germany. Had he *really* wished it, he might surely have prevented this cruelty. He had indeed complained of Luther's intolerance, when he was the victim of it. In a German work published at Zurich in 1526, he had used this language in regard to the course pursued by Luther and his party: "see then, how these men, who owe all to the Word, would wish now to close the mouths of their opponents, who are at the same time their fellow Christians. They cry out that we are heretics, and that we should not be listened to. They proscribe our books, and denounce us to the magistrates."§

* Luth. Comment. in Psal. 71. Opp. Jenæ tom. v, p. 147. Apud Audin, p. 465.

† III, 307. ‡ Ibid. § Apud Audin, p. 411.

But when *his* star culminated, he was as fierce a bigot, and as intolerant a tyrant as those brother reformers whom he thus denounced. Did he not die on the field of battle, fighting for his peculiar ideas of reform? And did not the Protestants of Geneva throw the poor Anabaptists into the Rhine, enclosed in sacks, and jeer them at the same time by the inhuman taunt, "that they were merely baptizing them by their own favorite method of immersion."*

This reminds us of a curious passage in the history of early Lutheranism, which we will here give on the authority of Florimond Remond, almost a cotemporary historian.† Franz Von Sickengen, the chief actor in the scene we are about to present, was a disciple of Luther who had dedicated to him his treatise on confession, written at the Wartburg, in 1521. "One day Franz was going from Frankfort to Mayence *sur le Meine*. A Jew entered the boat with whom Franz began to dispute. As he was not able to convince him by argument, he took him by the middle of the body, and threw him into the river; for Franz was a man of extraordinary strength. Holding his victim suspended over the water by the hair, the following dialogue took place: 'Acknowledge Jesus Christ, or I will drown you.' 'I acknowledge him to be my Saviour: O dear master, do not harm me!' 'Say that you wish to be baptized.' 'Yes, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Then Franz took some water, which he poured on the head of the Jew, while at the same time he pronounced the sacramental words: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' The poor Israelite now made a great effort to rise: he clung to the boat,

* For this, and for many similar facts, see the authorities quoted by the Rev. John Hughes—now the distinguished bishop of New-York—in his oral discussion with Rev. Mr. Breckenridge, who did not answer them. We intend to give chiefly those facts which did not fall within the scope of that discussion.

† "Huttenus delarvatus," p. 405. Apud Audin, p. 200.

believing that the time of his deliverance had arrived. The knight however struck him on the head with his guantlet, saying, 'go to heaven, there is one soul more for paradise. Were I to draw the wretch out of the water, he would deny Christ, and go to the devil.' Luther on this occasion praised the zeal of Franz!

The Calvinists were at least equally intolerant with the Lutherans. When the former gained the ascendency in a portion of Germany in which the latter had before been predominant, they roused up the people against the sons of the devil—which is the name they gave the Lutherans. They drove them from their posts, of which they took possession. 'What a melancholy thing! More than a thousand Lutheran ministers were proscribed, *with their wives and children*, and reduced to beg the bread of charity,' says Olearius.* Calvinism could not tolerate Lutheranism. It had appealed to prince Casimir, and expressed its petition in two Latin verses, in which the prince was left to choose, in extinguishing the rival creed, between the sword, the wheel, water, the rope, or fire!

> O Casimire potens, servos expelle Lutheri:
> Ense, rotâ, ponto, funibus, igne neca."†

So inflexible were the early reformers and their disciples on the subject of persecution, that even the emperor of Germany and the authority of the whole Germanic body could not restrain their bitter intolerance against all who had ventured to differ from their ideas of reform. Protestants were resolved to persecute each other, though a Catholic power—the highest in the empire—interposed and commanded peace. The diet of Nuremberg, in 1532, had proclaimed a religious amnesty throughout Germany. It wished to pour oil on the boiling waves of controversy,

* D. J. Olearius—"In den mehr als 200 Irrthümer der Calvinisten."

† Salzer—"In seinem Lutherischem Gegen-Bericht"—Art. iv, p. 385. Schlosser—"In der wahrheit," &c. ch. vi, p. 73. Hist., Aug. Confess. fol. 206, 207, 274, 275. Apud Audin, p. 330.

in order to still them: but the waves would not be quieted. The heads of the reformed party met at Cadan in the following year, and resolved to exclude from the peace published by the diet the Sacramentarians, the Anabaptists, and other heterodox (*not Lutheran*) sects, whom they declared *they would not tolerate nor suffer to remain in the country.**

If Protestants thus ruthlessly persecuted each other, we might naturally suppose that they were not more indulgent towards the Catholics. We have already proved that the reformation was mainly indebted for its success to systematic persecution of the Catholic church. Wherever it made its appearance its progress was marked by deeds of violence. Like a tornado, it swept every thing before it; and you might as easily trace its course by the ruins it left behind. Churches broken open and desecrated; altars stripped of their ornaments or pulled down; paintings and statues destroyed; the monasteries entered by mobs and pillaged of their effects; Catholic priests and monks openly insulted and maltreated; the property of the churches and monasteries seized on by violence, after having been often pillaged and plundered: these were some of the ruins which the reformation caused—these the sad trophies which it erected to celebrate its triumphs over the Catholic religion!

In most places the Catholic worship was abolished, either by open violence, or by the high-handed tyranny of the secular princes who had embraced the reform. In vain did Luther in his cooler moments protest against these deeds of violence; he himself, as we have seen, had evoked the storm, and he could not calm it; probably he did not ever seriously wish this, for generally his language to his followers had breathed nothing but violence. This we have already shown.

It is a remarkable fact, as certain as it is striking, that

* See Robelot—Influence de la Reformation de Luther, p. 71.

the reformers derived their very name of *Protestants* from this same unquenchable spirit of intolerance! The diet of Spires in 1529 had made an effort to put a stop to the deeds of violence by which the reformation had desolated Germany. It had published a decree, which, among other things of less importance, enjoined that the decree of the diet of Worms in 1521 should be observed in those places where it had been already received; that where it had not been received, and the ancient religion had been changed in despite of it, things should continue *in statu quo* till the meeting of a general council, which was to decide on the matters in controversy; that the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the mass should be *every where free;* and that the princes of the empire should mutually observe peace, and should not molest each other on the score of religion.*

In other words, the diet decreed that both Catholics and the reformed party should enjoy freedom of worship, and that neither should molest the other. Had the reformers been really the advocates of religious liberty, they could have asked no more. But they desired something else: their notions of Christian liberty were more enlarged. They desired freedom to pull down the Catholic altars, and to abolish the Catholic worship wherever they had the power to do so. Hence, they met immediately after the diet, and *protested* against its most equitable decree as "contrary to the truth of the gospel."† And hence their name of *Protestants:* a name which stamped on their foreheads a brand of intolerance, of which they were not ashamed!

A volume might be filled with undoubted facts proving the intolerant spirit of the early Protestants of the various nations of Europe against the Catholics. Wherever they had the power, they persecuted by civil disabilities

* See Sleidan—ad annum 1529, lib. vi. Also Natalis Alexander, Hist. Ecclesiastica, tom. ix. fol. 97, edit. Venitiis, 1778; and Lingard, History of England—Henry VIII; and Audin, p. 289. † Ibid.

and corporal punishments; and where they had not the power, they excited disturbance and persecuted by slander. We know of no exception to this remark. Unpalatable as it may appear, it is triumphantly established by facts; and we are not free to change the records of history to pander to an over delicate and vitiated taste. Out of a mass of evidence bearing on the subject, we will select some of the more prominent facts.

We have already alluded to the overture for peace made by the Catholics in the diet of Nuremberg, held in 1532. How was it received by the Lutherans? They rejected it with indignation, not only in the assembly at Cadan, but also through their organ, Urbanus Regius. Hear his language: "We must either have peace with the papists—that is, we must suffer the destruction of our faith, our rights, our life, and die as sinners—or we must have peace with Christ, that is to say, be hated by our enemies, and live by faith. Which shall we choose? The rage of the devil, the hostility of the world, a struggle with antichrist, or the protection of heaven, and life through Christ?"*

Luther openly defended the violence by which the Catholic worship had been suppressed, and the monasteries seized upon and secularized. He was consulted on the subject, and this was his reply: "It is said that no violence should be used for conscience' sake; and yet have not our princes driven away the monks from their asylum? Yes: we must not oblige any one to believe our doctrine; we have never done violence to the consciences of others (!); but it would be a crime not to prevent our doctrine from being profaned. To remove scandal is not to force the conscience. I cannot force a rogue to be honest, but I can prevent him from stealing. A prince cannot constrain a highway robber to confess the Lord, but yet he has a gallows for malefactors." Strange casuistry! Curious theory of religious liberty!

* Seckendorf—"Comment. de Luth." lib. iii, p. 22.

He continues: "Thus, when our princes were not certain that the monastic life and private masses were an offence to God, they would have sinned had they closed the convents; but after they have been enlightened, and have seen that the cloister and the mass are an insult to the Deity, they would have been *culpable* had they not employed the power they had received to *proscribe them.*"*

In the famous convention at Smalkald, in 1536, the Protestant party decided on a recourse to arms to defend themselves, that is, to be enabled to carry out their plan of establishing the reformation by violence on the ruins of Catholic institutions. They proclaimed that "it was an error to believe that they *ought to tolerate* among them those who opposed the reform."† In an imperial citation addressed to the citizens of Donauwert in 1605, they are reproached with having driven from their city, as atrocious malefactors,‡ those of their fellow citizens who had espoused Catholics, or embraced the Catholic religion.§ Again, at a session of the famous congress of Westphalia, in March, 1647, Trautmansdorf openly accused the Protestant party of having driven Catholic laymen from their dominions, after having confiscated their property."‖

This spirit of persecution has been perpetuated, with some modifications, even to the present day. Erasmus had remarked of Luther that his savage nature had not been softened even by the blandishments of matrimony; and we may remark that the fierce intolerance of the early reformation has not been much mitigated by the growing refinement of the age!

Even as late as the battle of Jena, in 1806, Catholics could not own property in Saxony, nor hold public offices, nor enjoy any of the rights of citizenship.¶ This was also the case in Prussia; and even in our own day, have we not seen a venerable octogenarian, the archbishop

* Luth. Opp. edit. Wittemb. ix, 455. † See Robelot ut sup. p. 71.
‡ *Atrocissimè delinquentes.* § Ibid. ‖ Ibid. 72. ¶ Ib. 70.

of Cologne, violently dragged from his palace by a band of soldiers, in the dead hour of night, and confined for years in a state prison, by order of the king of Prussia, and all this for no other offence than that his conscience did not allow him to subscribe to the religious creed of his royal master?

In the imperial city of Frankfort *sur le Meine*, Catholics were not eligible to any municipal offices. Even as late as the 20th of October, 1814, no others than Lutherans of the confession of Augsburg were eligible to any civil office in the free city of Hamburg.* In Sweden it is strictly forbidden for any Protestant to embrace the Catholic religion, though Catholics are encouraged to become Protestants. No Catholic can there hold any office of trust or emolument. The same intolerant laws are in force in Denmark and Norway.

In these last named kingdoms, religious persecution, in one form or other, has continued even to the present day. In many of the other Protestant kingdoms of Germany, the penal laws against Catholics were softened down after the famous congress of Vienna, in 1815, had settled the general peace of Europe. Yet the refinement of modern civilization has not been able wholly to exorcise the demon of intolerance. It still exists, to a greater or less extent, in every Protestant country of Europe.

But the other day, when the Roman pontiff nominated a bishop to attend to the spiritual wants of a large body of Catholics living in the kingdom of Denmark, the government organ at Copenhagen republished an old law of the kingdom, which made it a capital offence for a Catholic clergyman or bishop to cross the border! When the celebrated M. De Haller embraced the Catholic religion, in 1821, the grand council of Berne, in Switzerland, had his name stricken from the list of its members, and revived the old law of the canton by which no Catholic is eligible to office.†

* See apud Robelot, ibid. † Ibid.

In one word, not to multiply facts, Protestants have been guilty of persecution in *every* country of Europe where they have had the power, not only against the Catholic church, but against each other: and their intolerance, though greatly mitigated, is yet even at this day far from being extinct.

Catholics also, we must admit, have frequently persecuted; and, far from justifying them for so doing, we sincerely condemn them for their conduct. It was justified by no law of their church; it was wholly at variance with the mild teachings of the Christian religion. Yet every impartial person must allow that the circumstances under which Catholics persecuted were not so aggravated, nor so wholly without excuse, as those under which they were persecuted by Protestants. They were on the defensive, while these were in almost every instance the first aggressors. They did but repel violence by violence, when their property, their altars, and all they held sacred, were rudely invaded by the new religionists, under pretext of reform. Their acts of severity were often deemed necessary measures of precaution against the deeds of lawless violence which every where marked the progress of reform. They did but seek the privilege of retaining quietly the religion of their fathers, which the reformers would fain have wrested from them by violence. They were the older, and they were in possession.* Could it be expected that they would yield without a struggle all that they held most dear and most sacred? These were extenuating circumstances, which, though they did not justify their intolerance, yet greatly mitigated its malice, while the reformers could allege no such pretext.

Much has been written about the Spanish inquisition, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day. We justify

* In the Synod of Dort in 1618, the Gomarists used this very argument to justify their persecution of their brother Protestants, the Arminians.—Sess. xvii.

neither. To the former we have devoted a separate essay ;* for the latter we have an ample set-off in the terrible massacres of the Catholics, perpetrated in various parts of France, and especially in that at Nismes, on the feast of St. Michael, in 1566. This dreadful *michelade*, as it is called by the French historians, was as tragical at least as the massacre at Paris on St. Bartholomew's day in 1571, five years later.

It is a remarkable fact, and one that does infinite credit to the clergy and Catholics of Nismes, that when the order for massacreing the Protestants of that city arrived from Paris, a few days after the tragedy of St. Bartholomew's day, the Catholics of the city, with M. Villars, the vicar general of the diocess, at their head, repaired in a body to the governor, and petitioned for a suspension of the execution until the French monarch could be properly enlightened on the subject. The interposition was successful. Charles IX, in his cooler moments, revoked the iniquitous decree, and conceived sentiments more just and Christian. Thus the Protestants of Nismes, who had but five years before cruelly butchered their Catholic fellow citizens, were saved from destruction! And thus were the Catholics avenged!† Similar interpositions, with similar success, were made by the Catholic clergy and people in other cities of France.‡

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the Protestant governments of Europe is the union in them of church and state. This unhallowed union began at the period of the reformation; and it subsists even to this day. In Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and England, the king is at the same time the head of the state and of the

* See the Essay on the Spanish Inquisition, published in the U. States Catholic Magazine, August No., 1843.

† See Robelot *sup. cit.* p. 75, note.

‡ See Lingard's excellent Essay on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and his triumphant reply to the strictures of the Edinburg Review, in his History of England—Elizabeth.

church established by law. It is his province to regulate every thing connected with the preaching of the word, the administration of the sacraments, and the appointment of bishops and pastors. Even in those cantons of Switzerland in which the reformation obtained a footing, the legislative councils claim to this day a right to interfere in spiritual matters; and the Catholics of Argovia and other cantons have very recently felt the smart of their intolerant interference.

Every body knows the high-handed measures by which the late king of Prussia, but a few years ago, sought to unite into one "national church of Prussia" the two conflicting parties of religionists in his kingdom, the Lutherans and the Calvinists. This political manoeuvre, to effect by force a compromise between two warring sects, displeased them both, as might have been expected; and many of the ejected ministers of both parties, but especially of the Lutheran, sought shelter from the storm on our shores. The success of the attempt made by the court of Berlin on the religious liberties of Prussia, proves conclusively, that there at least the church is but the creature of the state—meanly subservient to all its high behests.

Every one also knows, that the persecution of the Catholics of Belgium by the Protestant government of Holland led to the recent declaration of independence by the former government: and that after the declaration had been made good, the Belgians elected a Protestant, prince Leopold, for their sovereign. Can the annals of Protestantism afford an example of liberality like this? At least, we have never heard of a Protestant community voluntarily choosing a Catholic sovereign.

If the reformation was favorable to religious liberty, why, we ask, did it bring about a union of church and state in every country where it was established? Why did it every where persecute? It is curious to trace the origin of this mean subserviency of the Protestant sects to

the princes, who caused them to be introduced into their states.

The reformers preached up freedom from the alleged tyranny of Rome: the people were seduced by this flattering appeal to their natural aversion to restraint; and the reformation was effected in the manner which we have endeavored to unfold. Once freed from the authority of Rome, the reformers threw themselves and their partisans, for protection, into the arms of the secular princes who had espoused their cause; and these gave them a bear's embrace. They had escaped from an imaginary, and they now fell into a real bondage. They had gone out of the dark land of Egypt, and had returned from the captivity of Babylon: but in the land of promise into which they led their exulting hosts of disenthralled disciples, they found other Pharaohs and other Nabuchadonosors, who lorded it over them with a rod of iron. "And the last state of these men was made worse than the first."*

Luther soon perceived, that the only means of stemming the torrent of innovation, which he had let loose on the world, was to give unlimited power to princes in spiritual matters. Melancthon earnestly labored to retain the order of bishop; but his unrelenting master could not brook this odious remnant of the papacy. The result was, as Melancthon had foreseen, that for them he substituted other bishops armed with the power of the sword. These were not so scrupulous as had been their Catholic predecessors in the episcopal office. After having seized and embezzled the property of the church, they reigned supreme in church and state. They interfered in the minutest affairs of church government. It was by the importunities of the *pious and scrupulous* Landgrave of Hesse, that Luther was induced, against his inclination, to suppress the elevation of the Host in the mass.† Thus, as M. Audin well remarks, "the reformation which was ushered into Germany by its

* St. Matth. xii, 45.

† Jak. Marx, sup. cit. p. 177.

apostles as a means of forcing the people from the sacerdotal yoke, created a Pagan monstrosity—hierophant and magistrate—who with one arm regulated the state, and with the other, the church."*

This usurpation of Protestant princes was legalized, and became a settled matter of state policy, at the congress of Westphalia in 1648. This congress recognized in the Protestant princes of Germany the *jus reformandi*, or the right to reform the churches existing within their dominions, according to their own judgment and good pleasure.† Thus, after a protracted struggle of more than a hundred years, during which oceans of blood had been poured out in the sacred name of liberty, Protestantism sunk exhausted—a degraded slave—in the murderous embrace of earthly princes! It was bound hand and foot, and could not move, but by the permission of its remorseless master!

The reformers were themselves the sole cause of this unhappy result. They had flattered princes, and had courted the union, to which may be fairly traced the servile degradation of the sects they founded. They had invoked the power of the sword, not only against Catholics, but also against their brother religionists, who dared oppose their schemes of reformation. They had proclaimed, that the right of suppressing heresy "belonged only to princes, who alone could mow down the cockle with the sword."‡ At the general assembly of the Protestant party at Hamburg in 1536, the deputies of Lunenburg had said: "the magistrate has the power of life and death over the heretics."§

Luther himself, in his defence of the enactments of this assembly, addressed to the Landgrave of Hesse,‖ had laid down this principle: "If then there takes place between

* P. 347. † Jak. Marx—Ibid.
‡ Ott. ad annum, 1536. Gastius, sup. cit. p. 365. Audin, p. 463.
§ Ott. Ibid, p. 86. ‖ Referred to above, p. 253.

Catholics and sectaries, one of those discussions in which each combatant advances with a text, it is the duty of the magistrate to take cognizance of the dispute, and to impose silence on those whose doctrine does not accord with the holy books." Could he blame princes for using the power which he himself vested in them?

The history of the union of church and state in Saxony, will throw some light on its subsequent establishment in other Protestant countries. It was to meet the wishes and to carry out the suggestions of Luther, that John, elector of Saxony—naturally a weak and effeminate prince —first interfered in the affairs of the church. After he had entered, however, on his new spiritual functions, his *ardent* zeal carried him farther than the monk had bargained for. "He determined to free himself from the domination of the clergy (Protestant); and for that purpose found that the most efficacious means was to apply at once the reforming theories of Luther to the organization of parishes. A commission of ecclesiastics and laymen was accordingly named by the elector, who were charged to visit and administer the different districts. It was a real revolution. The church lost even its name: it was turned into a Pagan temple."*

Let us also see what is the opinion of Mr. Hallam on the influence of the reformation on religious liberty. He surely is not prejudiced against the reformers, as we have had occasion to see; and his opinion must therefore be of great weight in the matter. We have already given some extracts from his latest work, bearing at least indirectly on the present subject. We add the following passages.

"It is often said that the essential principle of Protestantism, and that for which the struggle was made, was something different from all we have mentioned; a perpetual freedom from all authority in religious belief, or what goes by the name of the right of private judgment.

* Audin, p. 353.

But, to look more nearly at what occurred, this permanent independence was not much asserted, and still less acted upon. The reformation was a change of masters; a voluntary one no doubt, *in those who had any choice;* and, in this sense, an exercise, for the time, of their personal judgment. But no one having gone over to the confession of Augsburg or that of Zurich, was deemed at liberty to modify these creeds at his pleasure. He might of course become an Anabaptist or an Arian; but he was not the less a heretic in doing so than if he had continued in the church of Rome. By what light a Protestant was to steer, *might be a problem, which at that time, as ever since, it would perplex a theologian to decide:* but in practice, the law of the land which established one exclusive mode of faith, was the only safe, as, in ordinary circumstances, it was, upon the whole, the most eligible guide."*

In another place, speaking of the causes which brought about the decline of Protestantism and the reaction of Catholicity, he says: "we ought to reckon also among the principal causes of this change, those perpetual disputes, those irreconcilable animosities, that bigotry, above all, and persecuting spirit, which were exhibited in the Lutheran and Calvinistic churches. Each began with a common principle—the necessity of an orthodox faith. But this orthodoxy evidently meant nothing more than their own belief as opposed to that of their adversaries; a belief acknowledged to be fallible, yet maintained as certain; rejecting authority in one breath, and appealing to it in the next, and claiming to rest on sure proofs of reason and Scripture, which their opponents were ready with just as much confidence, to invalidate."†

In conclusion, we may observe, that in regard to toleration, the Catholic countries of Europe at the present time compare advantageously with those which have been *enlightened* by the reformation for the last three hundred

* "History of Literature," &c. vol. 1, p. 200. † Ibid. i, 278.

years. There is not *one* Catholic government of Europe which now persecutes for conscience' sake: and on the other hand, there is scarcely one Protestant government, which *does not* persecute, in one form or other, even at this day! We have already seen what is the present policy of the latter, in regard to toleration. Our assertion in regard to the former, can be easily substantiated.

Belgium is Catholic, and Belgium has a Protestant king, allows equal political rights to Protestants with Catholics, and is at the same time, perhaps, the freest monarchy in Europe. The inquisition has been long since abolished in Spain and Portugal, and these no longer persecute dissenters. France is Catholic, and France not only does not persecute, but she protects the Protestant religion, and pays its ministers, even more than she allows to the Catholic clergy—which is but equitable, as those have their *wives* and *families* to support! The present leading minister of state in France is a Calvinist, M. Guizot!

Bavaria is Catholic; and Bavaria allows equal civil rights to Protestants as to Catholics. Hungary is Catholic; and Hungary does the same. Austria is Catholic; and Austria adopts the same equitable policy. Bohemia is Catholic; and Bohemia imitates the example of the other Catholic states. Italy is Catholic; and Protestants have places of worship and public cemeteries at the very gates of the eternal city itself! So far is this toleration carried, that but a few years since, a parson of the church of England, delivered a course of lectures against popery at Rome itself; and Dr. Wiseman answered them.

Poland—poor bleeding and crushed Poland, *was* Catholic to its very heart's core; and Poland was never sullied with persecution! Ireland was ever Catholic; and Ireland never persecuted, though she had it in her power to do so at three different times! Finally, it was the Catholic lord

Baltimore, and the Catholic colonists of Maryland, who in 1648 first proclaimed on these shores the great principle of universal toleration, while the Puritans were persecuting in New England, and the Episcopalians in Virginia!*

* See Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. 1, Maryland. About the same time, or perhaps a few years previous, Roger Williams, driven into the wilderness by the Puritans of Massachusetts, established the colony of Rhode Island, the charter of which granted free toleration, from which, however, the Catholics were in all probability excluded?

CHAPTER XII.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON CIVIL LIBERTY.

"The most striking effect of the first preaching of the reformation was that it appealed to the ignorant; and though political liberty * * cannot be reckoned the aim of those who introduced it, yet there predominated that revolutionary spirit which loves to witness destruction for its own sake, and that intoxicated self-confidence which renders folly mischievous."—*Hallam.**

Puffing—Theory of government—Political liberty—Four things guarantied—Pursuit of happiness—The popes and liberty—Rights of property—Use made of confiscated church property—The Attila of the reformation—*Par nobile fratrum*—Spoliation of Catholics—Contempt of testamentary dispositions—The *jus manuale* abolished—And restored—Disregard of life—And crushing of popular liberty—The war of the peasants—Two charges made good—Grievances of the peasants—Drowned in blood—Luther's agency—Halting between two extremes—Result—Absolute despotism—Swiss cantons—M. D'Aubigné puzzled—Liberty, a mountain nymph—The old mother of republics—Security to character—Recapitulation.

THE friends of the reformation have been in the habit of boasting, that to it we are indebted for all the free institutions we now enjoy. Before it, there was nothing in the world but slavery on the one hand, and reckless despotism on the other: after it, came liberty and free governments. In school-boy orations and Fourth-of-July speeches; in sermons from the pulpit and in effusions from the press; this assertion has been reiterated over and again with so much confidence, that many persons of sincerity and intelligence have viewed it as founded in fact. To such we would beg leave to present the following brief summary of facts bearing on the subject. Let them read both sides; and then will they be able to form an enlightened judgment.

* "History of Literature," vol. i, p. 192.

M. D'Aubigné asserts roundly: "the reformation saved religion, and with it society."* We have already seen what it did for religion: we will now examine what it did for society. Did it really save society; or was society saved in *spite* of it? To narrow down the ground of the inquiry; did it really contribute by its influence to check political despotism, and to protect the rights of the people? Or, in other words, did it develop the democratic principle, and originate free institutions? Were we to decide according to the measure of its boasting, it certainly did this and much more. It had liberty forever on its lips: it loudly proclaimed that one great object of its mission was to free mankind from a degrading servitude, both religious and political. But was its practice in accordance with its loudly boasting theory? We shall see.

Political liberty guarantees security to life, to property, to character, and to the pursuit of happiness: and it does this with the least possible restraint on personal freedom. The greater the security to those objects, and the less the restraint on individual liberty, the more free and perfect is the system of government. A well regulated democracy—where the people can bear it—best corresponds with this theory, and is therefore, with the condition just named, the best of all possible forms of government. And the nearer others approximate to this standard, the more do they verge to perfection. Such are the principles of our political creed: and by them we will judge of the influence of the reformation on free government. Did this religious revolution provide greater security to life, property, honor and the pursuit of happiness, with less restraint to individual liberty than had previously existed? If it did, then was its influence favorable to liberty; if not, then, however its advocates may boast, its influence was decidedly hostile to true democracy. We will abide this test, which, we are sure, our adversaries will not be disposed to reject.

* Vol. i, p. 67.

1. We will begin with the object of government last named—security to men in the pursuit of happiness. No government is free, which does not guaranty this. The highest, the most noble, and the only sure way of pursuing happiness, is by the path of religion. Without this, there is, and can be, no real or permanent happiness, either in this world, or in the next. This, we think, will be admitted by all who are imbued with the principles of Christianity. Now, there is manifestly no freedom in this exalted pursuit, without the guarantee of religious liberty. Hence, a system—which sapped the very foundations of religious liberty, could not guaranty one of the greatest objects of all free governments—security in the pursuit of happiness. We have already proved, that the reformation did not secure religious freedom: and therefore, the inference is irresistible, that it did not tend to promote free government.

We will pursue this line of argument a little farther. The reformation cast off the religious yoke of the Pontiffs and of the Catholic church; and wore, instead thereof, rivetted on its neck, that of the princes who espoused its cause. Was the exchange favorable to liberty? Did the union of church and state which necessarily ensued, secure to Protestants in Germany a greater amount of freedom than they had heretofore enjoyed? The pope was far off, and he generally interposed his authority only in spiritual matters, or in great emergencies of the state: the princes, who succeeded to his authority, were present, and interfered in every thing, both in church and state—they were in fact supreme in both. When they chose to play the tyrant, who was to oppose their will?

The reformed party were powerless: they had given up themselves, bound hand and foot, into the power of their princes. The voice of the Roman pontiffs, which had erewhile thundered from the Vatican, and stricken terror into the heart of tyranny, was now also powerless: the reformers themselves had drowned that voice in the maddening cla-

mor of their opposition. What resource had they left to meet and repel tyranny? They had themselves, of their own accord, rendered powerless the only arm which could protect them, or redress their grievances.

The time has gone by, for men of sense and intelligence to clamor against the tyranny of the Roman pontiffs. Protestants themselves are beginning to view these much abused men in a more favorable light than they did heretofore. They no longer paint them as the unmitigated tyrants who lorded it over the world for their own selfish purposes and unhallowed ambition; but as the saviours of Europe, and the protectors of its political rights trodden in the dust by tyrants. Such Protestant writers as Guizot, Voigt, Hurter, Ranké, Newman, Pusey and Bancroft, have done justice to the popes: at least they have meted out to them a portion of justice.

The last named, says, speaking of Pope Alexander III, who lived A. D. 1167: "True to the spirit of his office, which during the supremacy of brute force in the middle age, made of the chief minister of religion the tribune of the people and the guardian of the oppressed, had written, 'that nature having made no slaves, all men have an equal right to liberty.'"* We might quote many similar acknowledgments made by Protestant writers: but the fact we have asserted will scarcely be questioned, and we refer to the works of the writers mentioned above—*passim*.

Nothing is, in fact, more certain than that the popes of the middle ages labored assiduously to maintain the rights of the people against the tyranny of their princes. Whenever they struck a blow, it was generally aimed at tyranny, and calculated to raise up the lower orders in the scale of society. The oppressed of every nation found a willing and a powerful advocate in Rome. When the Roman pontiffs threw around the people the broad shield of their protection, it was more effectual towards their defence

* History of the United States, vol. 1, p. 163.

against the tyranny which had ground them in the dust, than had been the eagles which had perched on the Roman standard of old. For Germany particularly, the deposing power, claimed by the popes of the middle ages, was a broad ægis thrown around the liberties of its people. When was that power ever exercised, but in behalf of the poor, the crushed, and the bleeding?

What would have become of the liberties of Europe in that period of anarchy and tyranny, but for its exercise? No other authority was available: because no other voice would have been heard or respected, amidst the general din of war and the confusion of the times. And by destroying that authority, the reformers broke down the most effectual barrier against tyranny, and destroyed the greatest security to popular rights.

2. But perhaps the reformation provided greater security for the rights of property, than had been made in the good old Catholic times?—We have seen how the Protestant princes seized upon and alienated the vast property of the Catholic church. They diverted it from its legitimate channels, and generally embezzled it for their own private uses. Neither the public treasury nor the people profited much by this sacrilegious invasion of church property.

True, the Protestant princes, who became the heads of the reformed churches, promised, in some places, to employ at least a portion of this immense property thus seized on by violence, for the establishment of public schools and hospitals. But this promise was never carried into effect, at least to any great extent. Thus, in Sweden, a great portion of the church property was given to the nobles, as a reward for their co-operation with the monarch, Gustavus Vasa, in carrying out his favorite project of reform: another large portion was annexed to the crown; and the miserable remnant was doled out with a niggardly hand for the support of the Episcopal body—which was there retained—of the inferior clergy, and of the charitable and

literary institutions.* In Denmark, the monarch and the nobility shared the spoils.†

In Germany, the avarice of the nobility swallowed up almost every thing, which had escaped the grasp of the perjured monks, or the pillage of the infuriated mobs. We have already seen, how Luther himself lashed them with his withering eloquence for their avarice, which had left almost nothing of the ample patrimony of the church, for the support of the reformed preachers and *their wives.* We shall see in the sequel, how he rebuked their parsimony, in not erecting and supporting public schools.

The ejected Catholic monks and clergy were reduced to beggary, and had no alternative left, but to starve, or to obtain a livelihood at the price of apostacy. Alas! too many of them adopted the latter course! John Hurd, a counsellor of the Elector of Saxony, whose authority is cited by Luther in his appeal against the avarice of the princes, asserts that the Protestant nobility had squandered in licentiousness, not only the goods of the monasteries on which they had seized, but also their own patrimony.‡

Many of these marauding princes were not content with the pillage of the church property within their own territory, but sallied forth with an armed band to devastate that of their neighbors. We have already adverted to the memorable exploits of many German princes in this way, and have seen how gallantly their armed bands put to flight whole troops of cowled monks and helpless women, in order to seize on their property! We have seen the excursion of the apostate Albert of Brandenburg, at the head of ten thousand armed men, into the territory of the prince Bishop of Treves.

This man, viewed by M. D'Aubigné as a saint, but more properly called "the Attila of the reformation,"§ estab-

* See Robelot, sup. cit. p. 177.
† Ibid.
‡ Ibid. p. 178.
§ Ibid. p 206.

lished a temporal principality, and laid the foundation of the present kingdom of Prussia, by his successful invasion of the property of others. He not only appropriated to his own private use the vast property belonging to the Teutonic Order, of which he was the general; but he also, by the same lawless means, annexed to his territory all eastern Prussia. He was as treacherous and unprincipled, as he was avaricious and lawless. To promote the purposes of his ambition, he passed from the camp of Henry II, to that of the Catholic Charles V; and though the treaty of Passan had guaranteed to the Lutherans of the Confession of Augsburg the free exercise of their religion, he, at the head of his troops, ravaged the territories of the Protestant princes—thus recklessly sacrificing friends and enemies! The reformation is welcome to all the credit its cause may derive from such *saints* as he and the Landgrave of Hesse—*par nobile fratrum!*

Bayle says to the reformed party, with caustic truth: "You forget every thing, when it is question of your interests."* The League of Smalkald, noticed above, had for one of its principal objects to protest against the decisions of the imperial courts, which had not granted entire liberty to the Protestant princes to pillage at will the property of the Catholics. It is a remarkable fact, that most of the criminal prosecutions commenced in this court were directed against the lawless violence of the Protestant nobility, and especially of the noted Landgrave of Hesse†. Catholics could not be secure in their property, and even the protection of the emperor was unavailing for this purpose, in those times of lawless depredation.

And be it remembered, that Catholics still formed the great body of the Germanic empire. Thus the reformation succeeded in depriving to a great extent of their most sacred rights, the majority of the people. Was this course favorable to liberty, which is a mere name, without secu-

* Œuvres, tom. ii, p. 621. La Haye, 1727.

† See Robelot, ut supra, p. 205, note.

rity to property? The truth seems to be, that the reformed party were so much attached to liberty, that they wished to *monopolize* it, and have it all for themselves!

But perhaps the most mischievous influence of the reformation on the rights of property, was its reckless disregard of testamentary dispositions. The property which the Protestant princes seized on and alienated, had been, most of it, accumulated by charitable bequests, made for special church and charitable purposes, by men on their death-beds. What right had the reformed party to interfere with these testamentary dispositions? What right had they to divert the property thus created, from the channels in which the abiding Catholic feeling of respect for the dead had caused it to flow for centuries? What right had they above all to squander, and to appropriate to their own unhallowed purposes, wealth that had been hitherto applied, by the express will of those who had bequeathed it, to religious and charitable objects?

And what security was there any longer left for the rights of property, when even the sanctity of last wills and testaments was thus recklessly disregarded? Had those charitable men of the good old Catholic times arisen from their tombs, how they would have rebuked this sacrilegious alienation of the property they had left! True, some stop was put to this unhallowed sequestration of church property by the treaty of 1555, in which such property was declared sacred, and last wills inviolable; and Robertson, the historian of Charles V, tells us, that the Protestant princes themselves at this treaty, after having at first opposed the article which checked their lawless violence, withdrew at length their objections, and acquiesced in its equity;* but the mischief had already been done, and they had already fattened on the spoils of the church.

But for the tumults caused by the reformation, the rights

* History of Charles V, l. xi Cited by Robelot, p. 181.

of property would, in all probability, have been permanently settled throughout Germany, at the close of the fifteenth century. The frequent depredations committed by the feudal chieftains of the middle ages on the property of each other and of their vassals, were effectually checked by the emperor Maximilian in an imperial law passed in 1495. This law of the empire abolished altogether what was called the *jus manuale*—or the right claimed by many lawless feudal sovereigns to take by force whatever they could lay their hands on; and it established an imperial court of adjudication, in which all points of contested jurisdiction were to be definitively settled, and all grievances from violations of the law to be redressed. Germany enjoyed a profound peace for many years after the enactment of this wise law: men breathed more freely; *might* and *right* were no loger synonymous terms; the rights of property were re-established.*

But this peace was, alas! of but short duration. It was a calm which preceded an awful storm. The violent preaching of Luther against emperors, princes and bishops, aroused again into full activity the dormant passions of the lower orders. Hence the dreadful war of the peasants, with all its appalling horrors, its effusion of blood, and the desolation with which it afflicted Germany. Seven years only had elapsed since the commencement of the reformation; and the confusion of the middle ages returned: the rights of property, of life, and of liberty were again ruthlessly trampled under foot with impunity. The years 1524 and 1525 were awful years for Germany. The princes of the empire availed themselves of the general disorder, to commit all manner of excesses. No man's property, or liberty, or life was any longer safe. The tree planted by Luther at Wittemberg was bearing its bitter first fruits!

3. The history of this war of the peasants sheds so much additional light upon the influence of the reformation on

* For a luminous view of this, see Robelot, *ut sup.* p. 200, 201.

the rights of the lower orders and the liberty of the people, that we will be pardoned for dwelling on it at some length. Our limits will however allow only a brief summary of the more prominent facts, and a rapid sketch of the leading features of that eventful struggle. It will be seen that the reformation provided no security either for personal liberty or for life itself.

We deliberately charge on the reformation two things: 1st, that it stimulated the peasants to revolt; and 2dly, that it used its powerful influence to crush that revolt by force, and to drown the voice of the poor peasants, crying out for redress of grievances, in their blood! The result of the rebellion, thus stifled in blood, was a weakening of the democratic principle, and a strengthening of the arm of power. At the close of the dreadful struggle, liberty lay crushed and bleeding, and despotism, armed with all its iron terrors, was triumphant. We hope to make good these assertions by undeniable facts and unexceptionable evidence.

The Protestant historian of Germany, Adolphus Menzel, candidly admits that Luther's doctrines were calculated to sow the seeds of sedition among the lower orders.* The violent appeal he had made against the emperor and the princes of the empire, at the close of the Diet of Nuremberg in 1522—two years before the revolt of the peasants—was in fact nothing else but an open call to rebellion.† His words fell like burning coals on the inflammatory materials which then abounded in Germany. The standard of revolt was every where raised: and on it was inscribed the talismanic word, *liberty*. Far from wishing to extinguish it, Luther fanned the flame with his breath. When the insurrectionary movements were reaching his own Saxony, he addressed a pamphlet to the German nobility, in which he sided with the peasants, and openly charged the princes with being the cause of the revolt.

* "Neuere Geschichte der Deutschen"—Tom. 1. p. 169.

† See extracts from this writing in Audin, p. 285, seqq.

He cried out: "On you rests the responsibility of these tumults and seditions; on you, princes and lords, on you especially, blind bishops and senseless priests and monks! You, who persist in making yourselves fools, and opposing the Gospel, although you know that it will triumph, and that you shall not prevail. How do you govern? You only know how to oppress, to destroy, and to plunder, for the purpose of maintaining your pomp and pride. The people and the poor have got enough of you. The sword is raised over your heads, and yet you believe yourselves so firmly seated, that you cannot be overthrown.*** My good sirs, it is not merely the peasants who rise up against you; it is God himself who comes to chastise your tyranny. A drunken man must have a bed of straw; a peasant will require something softer. Go not to war with them; you do not know how the affair will terminate."*

This was an appeal worthy of an apostle of liberty—it was seized up with avidity by Münzer and the other leaders of the revolt: all Germany was in arms. How soon did Luther change his note, and preach up the extermination of these same peasants by fire and sword! Before we show this however, we must first see what were the principal grievances of which the peasants complained, and what were their demands.

There is no doubt, that there was much fanaticism, and much extravagance in their whole insurrectionary movement: but there is as little doubt, that most of their claims were founded in strict justice. Chrystopher Schappler, a Swiss priest, drew up their manifesto, in which they demanded, among other things of less moment: "that they should pay tithes only in corn—that they should no longer be treated as slaves, since the blood of Jesus had redeemed them—that they should be allowed to fish and to fowl, since God had given them, in the person of Adam, dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air—that

* See Audin, p. 309, 310.

they might cut in the orest, wood for fuel and for building—that the labor should be diminished—that they should be permitted to possess landed property—that the taxes should not exceed the value of the property—that the tribute to the nobles, after the death of a father of a family, might be abolished, so that his widow and orphans might not be reduced to beggary—and finally, that if these grievances were not well founded, they might be disproved from the Word of God."*

How was this declaration of grievances met by the reformed party? If they were really the friends of liberty, they would at once have recognized the justice of most of these demands, and would have urged the princes to grant them. At least consistency, if not justice, required that Luther should have adopted this course. And yet he—the same Luther, whom we have just heard rebuking the tyranny of the princes, and justifying, nay, stimulating the peasants in their revolt—the very same man now changed his tactics, and loudly clamored for the blood of the peasants! He met their challenge, in which they had triumphantly appealed to the Scriptures for their justification, and wrote a labored treatise to prove, from the Word of God, that they were in the wrong!

In this reply to their statement of grievances, he said: "I know that Satan, under pretext of the Gospel, conceals among you many men of a cruel heart, who incessantly calumniate me; *(was this the reason why he abandoned their cause?)*. But I despise them: I do not dread their rage. You tell me that you will triumph; that you are invincible. But cannot God, who destroyed Sodom, overcome you? You have taken up the sword; you shall perish by the sword. In resisting your magistrates, you resist Jesus Christ."

He then goes on to answer from the Scriptures their

* Catrou—Histoire du Fanatisme, tom. 1. Menzel, tom. 1, apud Audin, p. 311, 312. See also Robertson's Charles V, in one vol. 8vo. American edit. p. 205, 206.

demands, one by one. Bible in hand, he defends tithes and even the enslaving of the poor peasants, who had demanded to be free! "You wish to emancipate yourselves from slavery: but slavery is as old as the world. Abraham had slaves, and St. Paul establishes rules for those whom the laws of nations reduced to that state." As if conscious of his own treachery and utter inconsistency, he winds up his reply with these words: "on reading my letter, you will shout and exclaim, that Luther has become the courtier of princes: but before you reject, at least examine my advice. Above all, listen not to the voice of those new prophets who delude you. I know them."*

What a change! As Luther had anticipated, the peasants accused him, with justice, of perfidy to them, and of mean sycophancy to princes. To prove the former, Münzer read to the assembled multitudes an extract from Luther's violent appeal against "the ecclesiastical order falsely so called,"† in which he had said: "Wait my lord bishops, yea, rather imps of the devil; Doctor Martin Luther, will read for you a bull, which will make your ears tingle. This is the Lutheran bull—whoever will aid with his arms, his fortune, or his life, to devastate the bishops and the episcopal hierarchy, is a good son of God, a true Christian, and observes the commandments of the Lord."

In his answer to Prierias, which it appears Münzer had not seen, he had employed this terrible language: "If we hang robbers on the gallows, decapitate murderers, and burn heretics, why should we not wash our hands in the blood of those sons of perdition, those cardinals, those popes, those serpents of Rome, and of Sodom, who defile the church of God?"‡

Luther's interposition came too late: and it lost all its

* Apud Audin, p. 312, 313.

† "Contra falso nominatum ordinem ecclesiasticum." Luth. Opp. ed. Wittemb. ii, fol. 120, seqq.

‡ Osiander (a Protestant) Cent. 161, &c. p. 109. Audin, p. 213.

force by its manifest treachery and inconsistency with his previous declarations. The struggle went on; the hostile armies met on the memorable field of Frankhausen: the confederated princes were triumphant, and the peasants were butchered like sheep. Their prophet Münzer fell mortally wounded: he embraced again the Catholic faith, and to his last breath accused Luther of having been the cause of all his misfortunes!*

"Such," says M. Audin, "was the end of the war of the peasants. In the short time in which they were permitted to afflict society, it is estimated that more than a hundred thousand men fell on the field of battle, seven cities were dismantled, fifty monasteries razed to the ground, and three churches burned—not to mention the immense treasures of painting and sculpture, of stained glass and of beautifully written manuscripts—which were annihilated. Had they triumphed, Germany would have relapsed into barbarism: literature, arts, poetry, morality, faith, and authority, would have been buried under the same ruin. The rebellion which Luther had caused, was the daughter of disobedience: her father, however, knew how to chastise her. If there was innocent blood shed, let it be on his head. 'For,' says the reformer 'it is I who have shed it, by order of God; and whoever has perished in this combat, has lost both soul and body, and is eternally damned.'"†

The voice of history proclaims, that Luther was the cause of the insurrection of the peasants, and of their subsequent slaughter. Protestant cotemporary historians have accused him of all this. Osiander says: "poor peasants, whom Luther flattered and caressed, while they were content with attacking the bishops and the clergy! But when the revolt assumed another aspect, and the in-

* For a graphic description of this whole struggle, see Audin, 315, seqq.

† Tisch Reden, edit. Eisleb. p. 276. Luth. Opp. edit. Jenæ. Tom. iii, fol. 130. Audin, p. 318.

surgents mocked at his bull, and threatened him and his princes—then appeared another bull, in which he preached up the slaughter of the peasants as if they were so many sheep. And when they were killed, how, think you, did he celebrate their funeral? By marrying a nun!" This reminds us of Erasmus' beautiful remark given above, that while Luther was revelling at his nuptials, "a hundred thousand peasants were descending to the tomb!"

Hospinian, another Protestant writer, says, addressing Luther: "It is you who excited the peasants to revolt."* Memno Simon, another Protestant, asserts the same thing.† Cochlæus, a Catholic historian of the time, estimates the number of the slaughtered peasants at 150,000; and says: "On the day of judgment, Münzer and his peasants will cry out before God and his angels, 'vengeance on Luther!'"‡

And have we not heard Luther himself boldly avowing his agency in the whole transaction, and even boasting of it, with a kind of fiendish exultation? Had he not recommended the princes to have no pity on the peasants, and threatened them with the indignation of God, if they poured oil on their bleeding wounds?§ Had he not said: "give the peasants oats; and if they grow strong-headed, give them the stick and the cannon ball?"‖

Such then were the tender mercies of the reformation! Such its regard for the lower orders! Such its political code! The poor peasants first stimulated to take up arms to secure their freedom, and then butchered by tens of thousands! In their tomb was buried whatever of liberty remained in Germany. The princes became omnipotent: the revolt once crushed, no one dared any longer to raise his voice in defence of freedom!

* "Historia Sacramentar." pars 2, fol. 200.

† Lib. de cruce.

‡ Cochlæus—Defensio Ducis Georgii, p. 63, edit. Ingolstadt, an. 1545, in 4to.

§ Epist. Nich. Amsdorf, 30 Maii, 1525.

‖ Epist. to Ruhel, edit. de Wette. tom. ii, p. 669.

The reformation had halted for a brief space between two dreadful extremes: that of absolute and uncontrolled despotism on the one hand, and that of dreadful anarchy on the other. It at first favored the latter, but soon it threw the whole weight of its powerful influence into the scales of the former. The result has been, what might have been expected, absolute despotism and union of church and state in every country of Germany, where the reformation obtained a footing! Had the reformers been really the friends of humanity and of liberty; had they urged the princes to redress the just grievances of the peasants; the issue of that struggle would have been very different. The lower orders would have been raised in the scale of society, and free institutions, which have not blessed Germany since the reformation, would have been raised on a solid and permanent basis.

One of the most famous Protestant historians of the day, M. Guizot, the present minister of France, tells us, in his "Lectures on Civilization in Modern Europe:" "that the emancipation of the human mind, (*by the reformation!*) and absolute monarchy triumphed simultaneously throughout Europe."* All who have but glanced at the political history of Europe in the sixteenth century, must at once see the truth of this remark. In the Protestant kingdoms of Europe, the rule suffers no exception: in all of them, absolute monarchy, in its most consolidated and despotic form, dates precisely from the period of the reformation.

Witness Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, and, we may add, England: for it is certain, that for one hundred and fifty years following the reformation in England, the liberties of the people were crushed; the privileges secured by the Catholic *magna charta* were wantonly trampled under foot; and royal prerogative swallowed up every other element of government. It was only at the period of the revolution in 1688, that the principles of *magna charta* were

* P. 300 of Lectures, &c. American edit. 1 vol. 12mo.

again feebly asserted, and partially restored to their proper influence in the government.*

In Catholic countries, the necessity of strong measures of precaution against the seditions and tumults occasioned by the reformation in every place where it had made its appearance, tended powerfully to strengthen the arm of the executive: and in the general ferment of the times, the people willingly resigned most of the civil privileges they had enjoyed during the middle ages, in order, by increasing the power of their rulers, the more effectually to stem the torrent of innovation, and to avert the threatened evils of anarchy. Thus the political tendency of the reformation, both directly and indirectly, favored the introduction of absolute systems of government throughout Europe.

And thus do we owe to that "glorious reformation," the despotic governments, the vast standing armies, and we may add, the immense public debts and the burdensome taxation, of most of the European governments! M. Guizot's assertion is well founded, both in the principles of political philosophy, and in the facts of history. We may however remark, that it was a strange "emancipation of the human mind" truly, which thus avowedly led to the "triumph of absolute monarchy throughout Europe!"

It would seem that Switzerland at least was an exception to M. Guizot's sweeping assertion; as absolute monarchy never was established in its cantons, even *after* the reformation! But the reader of Swiss history will not fail to observe that wherever Protestantism was established in that country, there the democratic principle was weakened, the legislative councils unduly interfered in spiritual matters, and despotism thus often triumphed in the much abused name of liberty. Those cantons of Switzerland are the freest which have remained faithful to the Catho-

* See an able essay on this subject in Nos. xv, xviii, xix, of the Dublin Review, "on arbitrary power, Popery, Protestantism;" republished in a neat 12mo. volume by M. Fithian, Philadelphia, 1842, p. 251.

lic religion. In them, you read of no persecution of Protestants for conscience' sake, of no attempts to unite church and state, and of little departure in any respect, from the original Catholic charter of Swiss liberties.

It is a remarkable fact, that the three cantons which first asserted Swiss liberty—those of Schweitz, Uri and Unterwald—have all continued faithful to the Catholic church; as well as to the good old principles of democracy bequeathed to them by the Catholic founders of their republic, William Tell, Furst and Melchtal. It was under these renowned leaders, that the troops of the three cantons just named fought, 1309, the memorable battle of Morgarten, which drove the Austrians from Switzerland, and caused the banner of Swiss independence to float triumphant over a people, as free as the air which stirred its expansive folds!

M. D'Aubigné admits, and is sadly puzzled to account for, this stern adherence of the oldest and freest Swiss cantons to the Catholic faith. He explains it, by appealing to the inscrutable ways of the providence of God! "But if the Helvetic towns," he says "open and accessible to ameliorations, were likely to be drawn early within the current of the reformation, the case was very different with the mountain districts. It might have been thought that these communities, more simple and energetic than their confederates in the towns, would have embraced with ardor a doctrine, of which the characteristics were simplicity and force: but He who said—'at that time two men shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left'—saw fit to leave these mountaineers, while he took the men of the plain. Perhaps an attentive observer might have discerned some symptoms of the difference, which was about to manifest itself between the people of the town and the hills. Intelligence had not penetrated to those heights. Those cantons which had founded Swiss liberty, proud of the part they had played in the grand struggle for independence, were not disposed to be tamely instructed by their younger brethren of the plain. Why,

they might ask, should they change the faith in which they had expelled the Austrians, and which had consecrated by altars all the scenes of their triumphs? Their priests were the only enlightened guides to whom they could apply; their worship and their festivals were occupation and diversion for their tranquil lives, and enlivened the silence of their peaceful retreats. They continued closed against religious innovations."*

Sure enough: why should they change the religion which had sealed their dear liberties with its divine sanction, and the principles and the worship of which were so closely interwoven with their most cherished reminiscences? "Intelligence had not penetrated to those heights," forsooth! They were not sufficiently enlightened to perceive,—what no one has yet perceived—that the seditions and tumults which every where marked the progress of the reformation, were favorable to liberty! They may bless the day, in which they took the resolution to adhere to the faith of their patriotic forefathers: and, from their mountain heights, amidst "their peaceful retreats," they may look down with proud complacency on their "brethren of the plain" torn by civil factions and religious dissensions—persecuting and proscribing each other —all in consequence of their having had the "intelligence" to embrace the "glorious reformation!"

John Quincy Adams, the "old man eloquent," has offered a more plausible solution of the difficulty which so sadly puzzled the mind of M. D'Aubigné. In a recent speech at Buffalo, he said that "liberty was a mountain nymph," who loved always to breathe the purest air, and to dwell in the most lofty situations, nearest to heaven! The old Swiss cantons had an instinctive feeling of the truth of this beautiful and poetic thought. They loved liberty, and therefore they remained Catholic!†

* Vol. 1, p. 82, 83.

† In the next chapter, we will show the political thraldom of Geneva under Calvin.

Did our space permit, we might here show what were the political opinions of the various Catholic States of Europe, adopted under the influence of the Catholic church, for centuries before the reformation was heard of. We might prove, that the Catholic church was the mother of republics; and that, long before the reformation, every important principle of free government—popular representation, trial by jury, exemption from taxation without the consent of the governed, *habeas corpus*, and the great fundamental principle, that all power emanates from the people—were generally recognized and firmly established. We might show, how almost every one of these sacred principles was successfully trampled on and abolished by that very reformation, which is forever boasting its advocacy of free principles! But this field is so ample, and withal so interesting, that we have deemed it advisable to devote a special essay to the elucidation of the varied objects of interest it opens to the view.* By comparing the political state of Europe in the good old Catholic times, with what it subsequently became, after the reformation had done its work, the reader will be best enabled to ascertain and appreciate the influence of this latter revolution on civil liberty.

4. Enough has, however, been already established to enable the impartial reader to form an enlightened judgment on the political influence of the reformation. We have seen, that with liberty forever on its lips, it really trampled under foot almost every element of popular government: that it weakened, and in many cases for a long time, entirely destroyed all security to life, to property, and to the pursuit of happiness: and that withal, it imposed the intolerable yoke of absolute despotism, with union of church and state, on the necks of its disciples! And all this, after men had been seduced to its banner, by the enticing name of liberty which they read inscribed thereon!

* See the essay "On the Influence of Catholicity on Civil Liberty."

We have not yet alluded to the influence of the reformation on one other essential element of free government—security to character. Did the reformation provide more ample security to this—the dearest perhaps of all human rights, than had been ensured during the Catholic times?

The reformation, as we have already shown, created dissensions and sowed distrust among those who had been hitherto united as brothers. It split up the religious world, till then "one sheepfold under one shepherd," into a hundred warring sects. These carried on bitter controversies with each other, and all united in fiercely denouncing those who continued faithful to the religion of their forefathers. Acrimonious denunciation, and personal recrimination, with the most scurrilous abuse, were the order of the day under the new state of things. The arms of ridicule, caricature, misrepresentation and open calumny were constantly used, in the hallowed name of the religion of peace and love! No man's character was then secure, especially if he had the independence to adhere to the ancient faith, and to call in question the infallibility of the new dogmatizers. Does not every one recognize at once the truth of this picture? And is it not true, to a great extent, even at the present day? What security then, we ask, did the reformation provide for character?

Thus, the reformation trampled in the dust, every important object of free government—security to life, to character, to property, to the pursuit of happiness, to personal liberty! And yet we are still to be told, that to it we are indebted for all the liberty we possess! Truly! if liberty was still preserved in some places, and if "society was saved" from barbarism, it was rather in *spite*, than in *consequence*, of the reformation!

In farther confirmation of what has been already advanced in this and the preceding chapters, we will here briefly give the testimony of the two recent Protestant travellers referred to above—Bremner and Laing—in regard to the *present* condition of civil and religious liberty

in northern Europe, which has been for three centuries under Protestant influence.

Mr. Bremner assures us that the king of Denmark is "the most uncontrolled sovereign in Europe. We have looked for," he adds, "but can find no single check to the power of the king of Denmark. Laws, property, taxes, all are at the mercy of his tyranny or caprice." The Danes boast much of the liberation of the peasants in 1660: but Mr. Bremner says, "that this was not a liberation of any class in the kingdom, but the more complete subjugation of all classes to the crown; and that the peasants remained and still remain in many parts of Denmark little better than serfs."*

Mr. Laing confirms this statement. This is his remarkable language; "it is one of the most remarkable circumstances in modern history, that about the middle of the seventeenth century, when all other countries were advancing towards constitutional arrangements of some kind or other, for the security of civil and religious liberty, Denmark by a formal act of her states or Diet, abrogated even that shadow of a constitution, and invested her sovereigns with full despotic power to make and execute law, without any check or control on their absolute authority. Lord Molesworth, who wrote an account of Denmark in 1692, thirty-two years after this singular transaction, makes the curious observation—'that *in the Roman Catholic religion there is a resisting principle to absolute civil power*, from the division of authority with the heads of the church at Rome; but in the North, the Lutheran church is entirely subservient to the civil power, and *the whole of the Northern people of Protestant countries, have lost their liberties ever since they changed their religion for a better.*' . . . . 'The blind obedience which is destructive of natural liberty, is, he conceives, more firmly established

* In the work cited above, chap. viii.—See Dublin Review for May, 1843.

in the Northern kingdoms by the entire and sole dependence of the clergy upon the prince, without the interference of any spiritual superior, as that of the Pope among Romanists (!), than in the countries which remained Catholic.'"*

This observation of Lord Molesworth is clearly grounded in history; and Mr. Laing confirms its truth in his work on Sweden. He says: "the Swede has no freedom of mind, no power of dissent in religious opinion from the established church; because although toleration nominally exists, a man not baptized, confirmed and instructed by the clergyman of the establishment, could not communicate in the established church, and could not marry, or hold office, or exercise any act of majority as a citizen—would, in fact, be an outlaw!"

He then goes on to prove that there is in Sweden a most rigid form of inquisition, which annually, even at this day, severely punishes from forty to fifty persons for alleged offences against religion. "The crime of 'mockery of the public service of God, or contemptuous behaviour during the same,'" he says, "is the first in the rubrick of the second class of crimes: that is, it comes after murder, blasphemy, sodomy, but before perjury, forgery, or theft. It is, evidently, a very undefined crime, but is visited with punishment in chains for various terms of years, as a crime against the church establishment. Between 1830 and 1836, not fewer than two hundred and forty-two persons have been condemned to chains for this crime in Sweden. Who will say, that the Inquisition was abolished by Luther's reformation? It has only been incorporated with the state in Lutheran countries, and exercised by the church through the ecclesiastical department of government in the civil courts, instead of in the church courts. The thing itself remains in vigor; Lord Molesworth was right when he said, that the whole of the Northern people of Lutheran

* Work cited above, chap. viii.

countries had lost their liberties ever since they changed their religion for a better." *(worse?)*

In Sweden, and in fact in all Northern Europe, the lower orders are little better than slaves. The servant may be cudgelled by his master, and no matter how barbarously he be treated, provided he be neither killed nor maimed, he has no legal recourse. Mr. Laing tells us as much. "The servant has no right of action on the master for personal maltreatment, and during his time of service has no more rights than a slave." "These people," he adds, "are trained to obedience, and in that class, to consider nothing their own but what is left to them by the clergy and the government, to whom, in the first place, their labors, time, and property must belong. A country in this state, wants the very foundation on which civil liberty must stand—a sense of independence and property among the people."

He sums up his remarks on the political and religious condition of Sweden as follows:—"Such a state of laws and institutions in a country, reduces the people as moral beings to the state of a soldiery, who, if they fulfil their regimental duties and military regulations, consider themselves absolved from all other restraints on conduct. This is the condition of the Swedish people. The mass of the nation is in a state of pupilage, living like soldiers in a regiment, under classes or oligarchies of privileged bodies —the public functionaries, clergy, nobility, owners of estate exempt from taxation, and incorporated traders exempt from competition. Under this pressure in Sweden upon industry, property, liberty, free opinion and free will, education is but a source of amusement, or of speculation in science, without influence on private morals, or public affairs; and religion, a superstitious observance of church days, forms and ordinances, with a blind veneration for the clergy," &c.

The politico-religious condition of Prussia is not a whit more flattering. The serf system continued to prevail in

this kingdom up to the beginning of the present century; and Mr. Laing assures us, that "the condition of these born-serfs"—the great body of the people—"was very similar to that of the negro slaves on the West India estate during the apprenticeship term, before their final emancipation."

He proves that the so much vaunted system of common school education in Prussia, is little more than a powerful state engine to enslave the people. "This educational system is in fact, from the cradle to the grave, nothing but a deception, a delusion put upon the noblest principle of human nature—the desire for intellectual development—a deception practised for the paltry political end of rearing the individual to be part and parcel of an artificial system of despotic government, of training him to be either its instrument or its slave, according to his social station."

He demonstrates the utter political degradation of Prussia, by enlarging upon the apathy with which the royal fusion of the two Protestant sects into one by the late king of Prussia, was viewed by the mass of the population. He proves at length that the Prussian is, in every respect, the veriest slave—bound hand and foot by government.

Such then has been, from unexceptionable Protestant testimony, the practical influence of the reformation on civil and religious liberty in those countries where that influence has been least checked, and longest exercised!!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REFORMATION AT GENEVA, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Character of Calvinism—Reviewing in advance—Protestant historians—The "Registers"—M. Audin—Calvin's character—Luther and Calvin compared—Early liberties of Geneva—The "Libertines"—Blue laws—Spy-system—Persecution—Death of Gruet—Burning of Servetus—Hallam's testimony—Morals of Calvin—His zeal—His complicated diseases—His last will—His awful death and mysterious burial—A *douceur*—The inference.

The second greater branch of the reformation was that established at Geneva by John Calvin. Of all the reformers, he was perhaps the most acute, learned, and talented. And he has succeeded, better than any of them, in impressing his own stern and morose character on the sect he founded. Geneva was the centre of his operations, as Wittemberg was of those of Luther, and Zurich, of those of Zuingle. Starting from Geneva, Calvinism soon spread through Switzerland, and extended to France, Holland, Scotland and England; and even on the soil of Germany itself, it was soon able to dispute the supremacy with the sect there established by Luther.

We have deferred till now our account of the origin and progress of Calvinism, because we intend to view it chiefly in its bearing on the subjects treated of in the two previous chapters—civil and religious liberty. Besides, in point of time, it is posterior to the branches of the reformation established by Luther and Zuingle. M. D'Aubigné's

History of "the great reformation," does not embrace that of Calvinism: he merely gives us a few incidents in the childhood and early youth* of the Genevan reformer;† together with a brief account of the early labors of the minister Farel, Calvin's predecessor at Geneva. As, however, the next volume of this work, if it ever appear, will probably enter on this subject in full, we may be allowed to anticipate somewhat, and by an honest hibernianism, to review it in advance.

Much additional light has been lately shed on the history of early Calvinism. Protestant as well as Catholic historians have labored with great success in this field. Among the former, we mention as the most distinguished, Galiffe, Gaberel, and Fazy. These three learned Protestants have all contributed greatly to elucidate the history of Geneva in the sixteenth century. The last named, M. Fazy, published in 1838 at Geneva, his "Essay on the History of the Genevan Republic,"‡ in which he enlarges on the influence of Calvinism on the destinies of the republic. The work of Gaberel, entitled "Calvin at Geneva,"§ enters more directly into the subject, and furnishes additional details.

But, for ability, and research into the history of early Calvinism, they are both perhaps surpassed by M. Galiffe. His three volumes of "Genealogical Notices of Genevan Families,"‖ unfold much of the secret history of Geneva under the theocracy of Calvin. He has ferreted out and published to the world the famous "Registers" of the Genevan consistory and council during the sixteenth century. These had been long lost to the world. The friends of

* He takes special care, however, not to allude to a *certain* passage in Calvin's youth, of which hereafter.

† Book xii, at the end of the third volume.

‡ "Essai d'un précis de l'Histoire de la Rép. Genevaise," 2 vols. 8vo.

§ "Calvin à Geneve," 8vo. 1836.

‖ "Notices Généalogiques sur les Familles Genevaises," 3 vols. 1831, 1836.

Calvin had carefully concealed them, out of respect to their father in the faith.

When quite recently, M. Vemet requested the Genevan secretary of state, M. Chapeaurouge, to communicate to him the order of proceedings touching Servetus, the council of state, to whom the matter was referred, refused to grant the request. However, M. Calandrini, the Syndic of Geneva, answered, that "the conduct of Calvin and the council in that affair were such, that they wished to bury it in deep oblivion."* But thanks to the indefatigable researches of Galiffe, and to the growing indifference of the ministers of Geneva for the memory of Calvin, those long hidden records of the political and religious history of Geneva during Calvin's life-time, have been at length revealed to the world. A Protestant has thus removed the dark veil which has hung over the cradle of Calvinism for centuries!

M. Audin, in his late "Life of Calvin,"† has availed himself of the labors of all his predecessors in this interesting branch of religious history. He qualified himself for his task by much patient labor and research. He assures us that there was not a library of any note in France or Germany which he did not visit.‡ In his travels, he discovered many letters of Calvin hitherto unpublished. Among these is his famous letter to Farel, which he found in the hand-writing of Calvin himself, in the royal library at Paris.§ The publication of this letter—which is of undoubted genuineness‖—has shed much additional light on the agency of Calvin in compassing the death of Servetus.

In what we will say on the history of the reformation at Geneva, we shall follow all these authors. More particu-

* The letter of the Syndic is published in full by Galiffe in his "Notices" *sup. cit.*

† "Histoire de la Vie, des Ouvrages et des Doctrines de Calvin"—Par M. Audin, auteur de "l'Histoire de Luther,"—2 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1843.

‡ Introduction, p. 19. § Published in full, vol. ii, p. 313, seqq.

‖ See Hallam—"Hist. of Literature," vol. 1, p. 280.—*Note.*

larly will we avail ourselves of the facts disclosed by M. Audin. Our plan does not of course require, nor will the limits of one chapter permit, any very lengthy details on the history of early Calvinism. The character of this branch of the "great reformation," is, in fact, nearly the same as that of those of Wittemberg and Zurich, of which we have already treated at some length. Similar means were also adopted to bring it about. Its effects on society, as we shall endeavor to show, were also nearly the same.*

John Calvin was born at Noyon, in France, on the 10th of July, 1509, and he died at Geneva, on the 19th of May, 1564, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. The first feature that strikes us in his character is his untiring industry and restless activity. Whether we view him as a student frequenting the schools at Paris—as a minister at Geneva, concerting with the ministers Farel and Froment his plans for carrying out the reformation—as an exile at Strasburg, intermeddling with the affairs of German diets and German reformers—or, after his return to Geneva from the exile into which his restlessness had driven him—throughout his whole life, in fact, he is the same busy, intriguing, restless character. He was never asleep at his post; he was always on the alert; he toiled day and night in carrying out his plans.

He was as cool and calculating as he was active. He seldom failed to put down an enemy—and every opponent was *his* enemy—because he could seldom be taken at a disadvantage. His vigilance detected their plans, and his prompt activity thwarted them. Though very irritable, and inexorable in his anger, yet his passion did not cloud his understanding, nor hinder the carrying out of

* Those who may wish to see a full history of Calvinism in its various workings in different countries of Europe, are referred to the "Oral Discussion" between Rev. Messrs. Hughes and Breckenridge—2d *Quest.* The former has anatomized Calvinism with all the *sang froid* and skill of a Dupuytren or a Dudley: while the latter quietly looked on, in *disrespectful silence!*

his deliberate purpose. In temperament he was cold and repulsive—even sour and morose. He mingled little with others, and was as reserved in his conversations as he was fond of retirement and study.

If he had any heart, he never gave evidence of the fact by the manifestation of feeling. At the death of his first and only child, he shed not one tear. In a letter to the minister Viret, he coldly informed him of the fact, and invited him to pay him a visit at Strasburg, telling him, as an inducement to come, 'that they could enjoy themselves, and talk together for half a day.'* He never manifested the least sympathy for those in distress, though in many cases he was himself the cause of their sufferings. Thus, when Servetus, on hearing that he was condemned to the stake, gave way to his feelings in a burst of agony and tears, Calvin mocked at his distress by writing to one of his friends that 'he bellowed after the manner of a Spaniard—*mercy, mercy.*'†

Thus also, when Castalio, one of the most excellent men and accomplished scholars of his age, was on the very verge of starvation at Berne, whither he had repaired to escape Calvin's persecution at Geneva, the reformer had the cold-heartedness to remind him that he had fed at his table in Strasburg; and, to do away with the effect of Castalio's arguments, which he found it difficult to answer, he accused him of theft! To the first charge Castalio answered, 'I lodged with you, it is true, about a week . . . . but I paid you for what I had eaten. How cordially you and Beza hate me.'‡ The charge of theft he indignantly repelled as follows: 'And who told you that? Your spies have deceived you. Reduced to the most frightful misery . . . . I took a hook, and went to gather the wood which floated upon the Rhine, which

* See Audin, Vie de Calvin, vol. i, p. 351, note, for Calvin's words.

† "Ut tantum Hispanico more reboaret: *Misericordia, misericordia!*" Ibid. vol. ii, p. 304.

‡ Castalio—Defensio, pp. 26, 40. Apud Audin, ibid. vol. ii, p. 239.

belonged to no one, and which I fished up, and burnt afterwards at my house to warm myself. Do you call this theft?'* Castalio, thus hunted down by his inexorable enemy, literally died of hunger while struggling to maintain, by his learning, a wife and eight children. But he had had the misfortune to differ with Calvin on predestination while at Geneva, and the boldness to reprove him and his colleagues with an intolerant spirit. 'Paul,' he had told them, 'chastised himself, you torment others.'†

Calvin's personal appearance was an index to his character. He was of middle height, of a lean and supple figure, with a contracted chest, with the veins of his neck full and prominent, his mouth well made and large, his lips bluish, his forehead expanded, bony, and furrowed with wrinkles, his eye restless, and, when he was excited, darting fire. His ceaseless labors caused him to become prematurely gray, and gave him a pale and cadaverous aspect. He was a man from whose appearance you would expect little that was not the result of hard labor.

What a contrast between him and Luther! Luther, a creature of impulse, a portly ex-friar, fond of good cheer, and never more at home than when conversing with boon companions at the *Black Eagle tavern:* Calvin, meagre, silent, and morose, shut up within himself, chilling all with his reserve—all head and no heart. In the pulpit the difference was most marked. Luther spoke extemporaneously, and, without method or choice of words, bore all before him by a torrent of passionate invective and boisterous declamation. Calvin was cold and unimpassioned, his diction was pure and polished, his thoughts clear and precise, and his whole manner calculated to make a more deep and lasting impression on his hearers. Calvin's was the eloquence of the head, Luther's of the heart.

* Defens. p. 12, ibid. p. 240. † Ibid. p. 234.

But they agreed in one thing—they both crushed the liberties of the people in the countries which were the respective theatres of their labors. Their profession of breaking the bonds of religious slavery, and of securing political freedom to the people, was all talk. It is too late in the day to hold them up as the champions of popular rights. The effect of the reformation, both at Wittemberg and at Geneva, was to weaken the democratic principle; in both places the rights of the lower orders were trampled under foot. In Germany Luther conjured up a storm which he could not control. We have already shown how he first stirred up the people to revolt, and then clamored for their blood, and how he succeeded in destroying their liberties.

Calvin also crushed the liberties of the people, but in a more insidious manner: he robbed them of their freedom in the name of liberty. A foreigner, he insinuated himself into Geneva, and, serpent-like, coiled himself around the very heart of the republic which had adopted him; nor did he relax his hold so long as he lived. He thus stung the bosom which had warmed him. That this language is not too strong, the following plain statement of facts will show.

The cantons of Switzerland formed one of the many republics of the middle ages. They owed all their liberties, and their very existence as a distinct government, to Catholics in Catholic times. William Tell, Melchtal, and Furst were the fathers of Swiss liberty. In 1307 was fought by these heroes the famous battle of Morgarten, which drove the Austrians from Switzerland, and secured Swiss independence. The bishops of Geneva had been its greatest benefactors. They had more than once protected the rights of the city against the aggressions of the dukes of Savoy themselves. One of them—Adhemar Fabri—as early as 1387, had written out the laws and privileges of the city; and the book was venerated as containing the *magna charta* of Genevan liber-

ties. Those laws provided that the citizens had the sole right of inflicting capital punishment; that none should be tortured without the consent of the people; that, from the rising to the setting of the sun, the citizens were the sole guardians of the city; and that no agent of the duke or bishop could exercise any power during that time, and that the citizens alone had the right to elect their burgomasters.*

Calvin trampled every one of these privileges in the dust. At the instigation of the ministers Farel and Froment, Geneva had already cast off the mild yoke of her episcopal court. Instead of it, she was doomed to wear, riveted on her neck, the iron yoke of Calvin's consistory. This spiritual court of Calvin's devising gradually monopolized all power in Geneva. The hitherto free council of the burgomasters became a mere tool in its hands. With its appliances of preachers, elders, and spies, it penetrated every where, and struck terror into every bosom. The pulpit was then a powerful instrument in the hands of the police. Every one trembled at the denunciation of the ministers, for it was sure to be followed by ulterior consequences.

Whoever will read M. Audin's book, and the Protestant historians referred to above, must be convinced of the truth of these remarks. Our limits will not allow copious details: we must confine ourselves to some of the more prominent facts which support the statement just made.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, Geneva was the great commercial heart of Europe. Occupying a central position between Italy, Germany, and France, it was a common mart for the goods of each. The enterprising flocked there from all parts of Europe. It was also a city

* Hottinger, Hist. des Eglises de la Suisse; Audin, vol. ii, p. 15. Those laws are written in the quaint old Latin of that period, and present a strange mixture of the old Savoyard *Patois* with the classical Latin.

of refuge for all the uneasy and restless spirits who, for religious or political intrigues, had been forced to leave their own country. The population of Geneva was, in consequence, of a most motley character. Calvin was among the many French refugees who took shelter there. Before his arrival, the reformation had been already effected by the agency of Farel and Fremont. Its course had been marked, as elsewhere, by pillage of the churches, by seizure of church property, by destruction of works of art, by robbery and sacrilege, and by massacres. You might have traced it, by its effects, as you could have traced the march of an army of Huns in the fifth century. La Sœur Jeanne de Jussie, a nun of St. Clare, an eye-witness of these horrors, and a sufferer by them, has left a most graphic description of them, and M. Audin has given us an abstract of her interesting work.*

Such was the state of things when Calvin came to Geneva. Among its citizens, the mechanics and common laborers formed a numerous class. These constituted a distinct political party, who viewed with an evil eye the ascendancy acquired by Calvin and the other foreign refugees. Calvin could not brook them, and styled them sneeringly the party of the 'Libertines.' And the history of his protracted and bitter contest with them forms the matter of many long chapters in M. Audin's book.† The high-priest at Geneva could not bear them, because, in their evening-parties,‡ they took the unwarrantable liberty of laughing at him—at his cadaverous figure, his withered hands, and his nasal twang in the pulpit; and they had even gone so far as to call him '*le renard François*,' or '*the French fox*.'

Besides, they had the unpardonable effrontery to drink healths, to dance, and otherwise amuse themselves when the labors of the day were over. Calvin's sour and mo-

* Vol. i, p. 195 to 215.

† Chapters i, vi, viii, and xv of vol. ii. ‡ Audin, vol. ii, p. 13, seq.

rose temperament could ill brook this cheerfulness, and especially those sallies at his expense. Besides, he was troubled with the asthma, and was subject to vertigo and headach. And what right had those vulgar clowns to shock his nerves, or to disturb his sleep? What right had they to their old and long-cherished national amusements, if it was in the least displeasing to the humor of this splenetic stranger? What right had they to sing, or to laugh at his peculiarities? If it was not downright blasphemy, as the minister more than once intimated from the pulpit, it was at least very impolite in them not to wear longer faces, at least while *he* was in the city.

Calvin determined to put down the "Libertines;" and, to effect his purpose, he procured the enactment of a body of laws, of which we will give a few specimens. They show us what was the spirit, and what the *modus operandi* of Calvinism at its birth. "They punished with imprisonment the lady who arranged her hair with too much coquetry (*the ministers were to judge*), and even her chambermaid who assisted at her toilet; the merchant who played at cards, the peasant who spoke too harshly to his beast, and the citizen who had not extinguished his lamp at the hour appointed by law."* "Men were forbidden to dance with women, or to wear figured hose, or flowered breeches."† "Three tanners were put in prison for three days, on bread and water, for having eaten at breakfast three dozen pieces of pastry, which was great dissoluteness."‡ "They forbade any one to have a cross, or any other badge of popery." "A merchant who sold wafers marked with a cross was fined sixty sols, and his wafers were cast into the fire as scandalous."§

Wo to him who did not uncover at the approach of Calvin; he was fined. Wo to him that gave him a flat contradiction; he was brought before the consistory, and

* Audin, vol. ii, p. 12.

† Ibid. p. 138, from Register of Geneva, 1522, July 14.

‡ Ibid. Register, 13th February, 1558. § Ibid. p. 178.

menaced with excommunication.* Wo to the girl that presented herself to be married with a bunch of flowers in her bonnet, if her chastity was suspected by the consistory. Wo to him who danced on the day of his marriage: he was imprisoned for three days. Wo to the young married lady if she wore shoes according to the present fashion of Berne: she was publicly reprimanded."†

"The Calvinistic legislation regulated even the number of plates which should appear on the table of the rich, and the quality of butter to be sold, &c."‡ "All were ordered to eat meat on Fridays and Saturdays, under penalty of imprisonment; and the night-watch was ordered to proclaim that no one should make slashed doublets or hose, or wear them hereafter under penalty of sixty sols."§ "Chapuis was put in prison for having persisted in calling his child Claude, although the minister wished to call him Abraham. He had said that, rather than do this, he would keep his child fifteen years without baptism.‖ He was kept in prison four days." "One day a relation presented himself at the altar with a young girl of Nantes to be married. The minister, Abel Poupin, asked him: Will you be faithful to your wife? The bridegroom, instead of answering yes, only inclined his head. Hence great tumult among the assistants. He was sent to prison, obliged to ask pardon of the young lady's uncle, and condemned to bread and water."¶

We might multiply facts of the kind, to exhibit the nature of early Calvinistic legislation. It was *blue* enough in all conscience; and the pious legislators who enacted the *blue* laws of Connecticut could at least boast precedent, if not common sense, for their enactments. The above, however, are but scraps of Geneveve legislation under Calvin's theocracy. To understand the spirit of

* Ibid. Register, 31st Dec. 1543.
† Reglement de Police, 29th July, 1549, ibid. ‡ Ibid.
§ Register, 16th April, 1543; Audin, vol. ii, p. 185.
‖ Register, 1546; ibid. ¶ Ibid. p. 186.

his laws, in all its length and breadth, you must read the criminal prosecutions of Berthellier, Gruet, Gentilis, Bolsec, Ami Perrin, Francis Favre, and Servetus, copious portions of which are spread before us by M. Audin from the original documents. We may have occasion to refer to some of these a little later.

To ferret out and punish the infractors of these laws, Calvin established a regular system of espionage. "He kept in his pay secret informers, in order to learn the secrets of families."* "Besides these, there was another band of spies, the elders, recognized by law, who could penetrate once a week into the most mysterious sanctuary of domestic life, in order to report to the consistory what they might see and hear."† "In one single year the consistory instituted more than two hundred prosecutions for blasphemy, calumny, obscene language, lechery, *insults to Calvin, offences against the ministers,* and attempts against the French exiles."‡ "The liberties of the city were crushed, and every one trembled for his life!" The spies whom Calvin employed were chiefly from among the most degraded of the French refugees; and this odious practice was carried to such length that the citizens trembled at the approach of one of these sinister individuals.

A curious instance of the *modus operandi* of these miscreants is found from the Register§ of Geneva. "Master Raymond, a spy, was passing by the bridge, when he heard a voice saying '*go to the devil!*'" "Who is that," asked Raymond of Dominie Clement, who was present. Dominie answered, "tis a girl who is wishing the 'Renard,' or 'Fox,' at the devil." Raymond thought the man meant to insult him: "You are a fox yourself," says he to Dominie, who answered, "I am as good a man as you are, and have not at least been banished from my country."

* Audin, vol. ii, 149.
† Ibid. p. 150.
‡ Ibid.
§ Register, 3 Sep. 1547.

Dominie was denounced to the consistory, which sharply reproved him. On his wishing to justify himself, Calvin silenced him, saying, "hush, you have blasphemed against God in saying 'I have not been banished.' "*

M. Audin furnishes us with a number of such facts.—Every enemy of Calvin was closely watched, and could scarcely escape being denounced. Wo to him that smiled while Calvin was preaching, even though he treated his hearers as "letchers, blasphemers and dogs." "Three persons who had smiled at a sermon of Calvin, on seeing a man fall from his chair asleep, were denounced, condemned to three days of imprisonment on bread and water, and to beg pardon."† These spies laid snares for the simple. They asked a Norman who was going to Montpellier, whether he intended to change his religion." The Norman replied,—"I dont think the church is so narrowly bounded, as to hang from the girdle of M. Calvin." He was denounced and banished! ‡

Talk of the Spanish Inquisition after this! And yet these are not the darkest shades of the picture. Far from it. They are mere *bagatelles*, compared to the horrible facts developed in the criminal prosecutions alluded to above. Whoever opposed Calvin, in religion or politics, was hunted down and his blood sought at *his* instigation. He never forgave a personal injury. In regard to his enemies, he was as watchful as a tiger preparing to pounce on its prey—and as treacherous! This is strong language; but it is more than justified by the official records of Geneva. We will present a few of the most striking facts, regretting that the limits of one chapter will not allow of more details.

How sanguinary is the spirit breathed in this extract of his letter to the Marquis de Pouet: "Do not hesitate to rid the country of those fanatical fellows, *(faquins)* who in their conversation seek to excite the people against us,

* See Audin, vol. 2, p. 167. † Audin 2, 171. ‡ Ibid. 2, 179.

who blacken our conduct, and would fain make our belief pass as a revery: *such monsters ought to be strangled, as I did, in the execution of* MICHAEL SERVETUS, *the Spaniard.*"* His vindictive conduct towards Pierre Ameaux, a member of the Genevan Council of twenty-five, is a fit commentary on this sentiment. At a supper, this man, inflamed with wine, had said some hard things of Calvin. At his table another man, Henry de la Mar, had also said, amidst the general applause of the guests: "that Calvin was a spiteful and vindictive man, who never pardoned any one, *against whom he had a grudge.*"—The next morning, Ameaux was cited before the Council, where he excused himself on the ground that he was excited with wine. The Council fined him thirty *thalers*—a large sum at that time. "On hearing of this sentence, Calvin arose, donned his doctor's dress, and escorted by the ministers and elders, penetrated into the hall of the Council, demanded justice in the name of that God whom Pierre Ameaux had outraged, in the name of the morals he had sullied, and of the laws he had violated; and declared that he would quit Geneva, if the man were not compelled to make the *amende honorable*—a public apology, bareheaded, at the city Hotel," and in two other public places! The Council yielded; and "the next day, Ameaux, half naked, with a torch in his hand, accused himself in a loud voice of having knowingly and wickedly offended God, and begged pardon of his fellow-citizens."† What is to be thought of a man, who could thus crush a penitent and stricken enemy! Had he the spirit of that God who "would not break the bruised reed?"

Henry la Mar, the other culprit, did not escape. He was dogged by Texier, one of Calvin's spies, who extracted from his lips under an oath of secrecy, some words disrespectful to his master. Texier came running to Calvin

* Ibid. p. 172.

† See the whole account, from original documents, in Audin, vol. ii, p. 181, seq., where also a number of similar facts are recounted.

with the news, saying that he did not think himself bound by his oath, when the public good required the disclosure. "Calvin accused La Mar, caused him to lose his situation, and had him condemned to prison for three days. The judges assigned as their reason, "that he had blamed M. Calvin!"*

Of a similar character was the prosecution, at the instance of Calvin, of Francis Favre, a veteran soldier of the republic and a counsellor of the city. He had been at a wedding where they had danced all the evening, and where he was accused by one of Calvin's spies of having used seditious language. Among the ten specifications against him, were several things he had said against Calvin; and the last and most grievous was, that he had, on being conducted to prison, cried out—"*Liberty! Liberty!!* I would give a thousand dollars to have a General Council!" (of the Burgomasters.) He was sentenced to beg pardon publicly. The veteran refused; he was sent to prison for three weeks, and was then liberated only at the instance of a deputation from Berne!†

Calvin also sought the life of Ami Perrin, the captain general of Geneva. Perrin's wife had been guilty of dancing on the territory of Berne. Calvin sought to entrap Perrin by means of Megret, one of his hired spies. This miscreant denounced Perrin before the council; and he was in consequence thrown into prison—Calvin thirsted for his blood. But the people loved Perrin. The council of the two hundred assembled to try him for his life. A reaction took place—Perrin was about to be liberated, and Megret was openly denounced! At this juncture, Calvin entered the council hall—the people received him with cries of "death to Calvin!" Calvin waved his hand, addressed them, calmed their fury; but barely succeeded by his eloquence in saving his own life!‡

* Ibid. p. 184. † Ibid. p. 189, seq.

‡ Ibid. p. 196, seq. By his influence, Calvin however succeeded in having Perrin afterwards tried, when, though his life was spared, he was deprived of the place of captain-general; ibid. p. 197, seq.

In reading these details, we are forcibly reminded of Marat and Robespierre, haranguing the Jacobin clubs during "the reign of terror." In fact, Calvin's reign in Geneva, was truly a reign of terror; and if during it, as much blood did not flow as during the French Revolution, it was not surely *his* fault! He combined the cruelty of Danton and Robespierre, with the eloquence of Marat and Mirabeau, though he was much cooler, and therefore more successful than any of them.

Who will not detest the cold-blooded cruelty with which he hunted down and compassed the death of poor Gruet, the poet?* He was accused of having affixed a placard on Calvin's pulpit at St. Peter's church, in which the reformer was severely handled. He was apprehended and his papers were seized. Among these, consisting of nothing but loose sheets, were found some scraps of poetry and other fugitive pieces, which were tortured into heresy and treason. He was plied with the torture by Calvin's creature, Colladon, every day for a whole month. They wished him to implicate Favre or Perrin; but though he cried out in agony of torture: "finish me, I beseech you —I am dying;" he remained firm, and would not accuse them. The council pronounced sentence of death on him. Among the charges against him, the principal were: "that he had endeavored to ruin the authority of the consistory —that he had menaced the ministers, and spoken ill of Calvin—and that he had conspired with the king of France against the safety of Calvin and of the state."† Gruet died on the scaffold, but Calvin was not yet satisfied. He wished that his writings should be condemned, and he himself drew up a long form of condemnation of them, which was approved by the council.‡ Calvin alone is responsible for the blood of Gruet; it yet cries aloud to heaven against him!

* He was not poet enough to excite much envy. † Aud. p. 200, seq.

‡ This document, found at Berne in the handwriting of Calvin, is given in full by M. Audin, ibid. p. 244, seq.

We might exhibit similar atrocities in his persecution of Bolsec,* of Gentilis, of Berthillier,† and of others. But we are heart-sick of these horrors, and must hasten on to a conclusion. Yet we cannot wholly pass over the case of Servetus, to which M. Audin devotes two whole chapters :‡ and upon which he sheds much additional light. We will state only a few prominent facts in this sad affair. 1st. Servetus was burnt on the 27th of October, 1553 ; and as early as 1546, seven years before, Calvin had thirsted for his blood, as appears from these words, taken from his famous letter to Farel, written in that year : "If he (*Servetus*) come here (*to Geneva*), and my authority be considered, I will not permit him to escape with his life."§ 2d. Pursuing this blood-thirsty purpose, he had denounced Servetus to the police of Lyons, where he then was. And when he (*Servetus*) had fled to Vienne, he very narrowly escaped—probably with the connivance of the Catholic clergy of Vienne—from the prison to which he had been consigned, at the instigation of officers sent in quest of him in consequence of his denunciation at Lyons.‖ 3d. When Servetus, fleeing from his enemies, passed through Geneva, Calvin denounced him and had him arrested, against all the laws of God and man.¶ For Servetus was a stranger, only passing through Geneva ;** and he was not responsible to the Genevan tribunals for a crime which he had not committed within the Genevan territory ; and this, even supposing heresy to be a crime punishable by the civil laws, which it is not.

4th. Though Servetus was a poor stranger, and begged for counsel to defend him, that right, not denied to the meanest culprit, was refused him at the instance of Cal-

* See Audin, vol. ii, p. 245, seq. † Ibid. p. 347, seq.

‡ Chapters xii and xiii of vol. ii, p. 258 to 324.

§ See the letter in full, vol. ii, 314, seq. ‖ Aud. vol. ii, 285, seq.

¶ Ibid. p. 287, seq.

** Bancroft assigns this same reason : "Servetus did but desire leave to continue his journey." Hist. U. States, vol. i, p. 455.

vin.* 5th. After Servetus had lain in prison five weeks, a victim of disease and devoured by vermin, he wrote to the council, stating his situation, and begging for a change of linen. The council wished to grant his request, but Calvin opposed it, and succeeded! Three other letters written during the following week from prison, in which Servetus begged for counsel, and asked that the charges against him should be specified and made known to him, were answered by——silence.† 6th. When, on the morning of his execution, Servetus sent for Calvin, and begged his pardon, if he had offended him, Calvin answered him with cold-hearted cruelty.‡ We have seen above how he insulted his tears. 7th. The heartless cruelty of the minister Farel, who accompanied Servetus to execution, is enough to make one's blood run cold at the bare reading of it.§ 8th. The year after the execution of Servetus, in 1554, Calvin published his famous work "*de Hereticis Puniendis*," in which he justified the whole proceeding by the authority of Scripture! Was this man sent to reform the church of God? He was worse than the caliph of Geneva, as M. Audin calls him—he was a very Nero! Gibbon has well said of this transaction: "I am more deeply scandalized at the single execution of Servetus than at the hecatombs (*not true*) which have blazed at *auto da fes* of Spain and Portugal."

Mr. Hallam gives the following account of the burning of Servetus. "Servetus having, in 1553, published at Vienne, in Dauphiné, a new treatise, called *Christianismi Restitutio*, and escaping from thence, as he vainly hoped, to the Protestant city of Geneva, became a victim to the bigotry of the magistrates, *instigated by Calvin, who had acquired an immense ascendency over that republic*."‖ And in a note¶ he brings abundant proof of this, alleging, among other things, the famous letter of Calvin to Farel,

* Audin, vol. ii, p. 297.
† Ibid. p. 299, seq.
‡ See the whole conversation, ibid. p. 305.
§ Ibid. p. 304, seq.
‖ "History of Literature," vol. i, p. 280.
¶ Ibid.

"published," he says, "by Witenbogart (*a Protestant*) in an ecclesiastical history, written in Dutch." In the same note he says: "Servetus, in fact, was burned not so much for his heresies, as for *some personal offence he had several years before given to Calvin.* . . . Servetus had, in some printed letters, charged Calvin with many errors, which seems to have *exasperated the great* (!) *reformer's temper*, so as to make him resolve on what he afterwards executed."

"The death of Servetus," he continues, "has perhaps as many circumstances of aggravation as any execution for heresy that ever took place. One of these, and among the most striking, is that he was not the subject of Geneva, nor domiciled in the city, nor had the *Christianismi Restitutio* been published there, but at Vienne. According to our laws, and those, I believe, of most civilized nations, he was not amenable to the tribunals of the republic."*

He concludes the entire account with this sweeping accusation against all the early reformers in regard to intolerance: "Thus, in the second period of the reformation, those ominous symptoms which had appeared in its earliest stage, disunion, virulence, bigotry, intolerance, far from yielding to any benignant influence, grew more inveterate and incurable."†

We think that the above facts make good our assertion, that Calvin crushed the liberties of Geneva—political and religious. The following fact may serve to show us how sincere was his zeal for the salvation of souls. The plague broke out at Geneva in 1543. The ministers from the pulpit recommended prayer *once a week* to avert the scourge, and they appointed the Sunday week next following as the day for administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper with the same intent!‡ The plague continued, and the ministers hid themselves, though hun-

* Ibid. † Ibid. p. 281. ‡ Register, &c., Audin, ii, 16.

dreds were calling on them for spiritual succor in their dying moments! The hospital was crowded with the dying. The council of state called on the ministers to send one of their number to assist the dying at the hospital, from which duty, however, they wished "to exempt M. Calvin, because the church had need of him!" The ministers met with Calvin, and agreed to decide by lot who was to go. One only, M. Geneston, offered to go, if the lot fell on him! The others "confessed that God had not yet given them grace to have the strength and courage to go to the hospital!" And "it was resolved to pray to God to give them more courage for the future."* The result was that no one went to the hospital, except Chatillon, a young French poet, and another Frenchman, who fell a victim to the disease. Were these men true shepherds, or were they mercenaries? The answer may be found in St. John's Gospel, chapter 10.

Calvin's morals have been discussed on both sides. Beza and his other friends have held him up as a model of perfection; others, with Bolsec, have represented him as a monster of iniquity. The story of his having been guilty of a crime of nameless turpitude at Noyon, though denied by his friends, yet rests upon very respectable authority. Bolsec, a cotemporary writer, relates it as certain. Before his work appeared, it had been mentioned by Surius in 1558, by Turbes, who lived in the reign of Francis I, by Simon Fontana in 1557, by Stapleton in 1558, by La Vacquerie in 1560–1, by De Mouchi in 1562, by Du Prèau in 1567, and by Whitaker before 1570.† M. Galiffe, a Protestant, who had examined most thoroughly the archives of Geneva, uses this plain language: "The history of many of the reformer's colleagues is very scandalous, the details of which cannot enter into a work designed for both sexes."‡ The same writer tells

* Ibid. Register of Council. † Vol. ii, p. 256. Note.
‡ Galiffe, Notices, tom. iii, p. 881. Note.

us "that most of the facts related by the physician of Lyons (Bolsec) are perfectly true."*

In the introduction to the third volume of his "*Notices*," M. Galiffe bears this testimony to the state of morals at Geneva in Calvin's time: "I will show to those who imagine that the reformer had done nothing that is not good, our Registers covered with entries of illegitimate children—(they were exposed at all the corners of the city and country)—with prosecutions hideous for their obscenity—with wills in which fathers and mothers accuse their own children not only of errors, but of crimes—with transactions before notaries public between young girls and their paramours, who gave them, in the presence of their relatives, means of supporting their illegitimate offspring—with multitudes of forced marriages, where the delinquents were conducted from prison to the church—with mothers who abandoned their infants at the hospital, while they were living in abundance with a second husband—with whole bundles of processes between brothers—with multitudes (literally heaps, *tas*) of secret denunciations: and all this in the generation nourished by the mystic manna of Calvin!"†

Truly, if the "Registers" prove all this, we may conclude that Calvin stamped his own image upon his generation—and especially his heartlessness.

The accounts of the circumstances attending the last sickness and death of Calvin are various. His disciple Beza, who wrote his life, represents his death as worthy of an apostle and of a saint. Yet he himself, as we shall see, furnishes us with some particulars which would make us doubt the truth of this picture. The diseases which led to his dissolution were many and complicated. In a letter to the physicians of Montpelier, written a short time before his death, Calvin gives a full account of the maladies with which he was tormented. Among these,

* Ibid. p. 457, *note*. Audin, ii, 257. † Page 15, apud Aud. ii, 174.

he mentions "the dropsy, the stone, the gravel, cholics, hemorrhoids, internal hemorrhages, quartan fever, cramps, spasmodic contractions of the muscles from the foot to the knee, and, during the whole summer, a frightful neuralgia or nervous affection."*

His malady increasing, he dictated his last will and testament on the 26th of April, 1564. The greater part of this curious instrument is devoted to a defence of his conduct and motives throughout life!† He "protests that he has endeavored, according to the measure of grace given to him, to teach with purity the word of God, as well in his sermons as in his writings, and to expound faithfully the Holy Scriptures. And that, in all the disputes which he had had with the enemies of truth, he had employed neither chicanery nor sophistry, but had proceeded roundly (*rondement*) to maintain the quarrel of God." In disposing of his effects, towards the close of his will, he thus speaks of his nephew: "As to my nephew David . . because he has been light and volatile, I leave him only twenty-five crowns (*ecus*) AS A CHASTISEMENT."

On the morning of the 27th of May, at 8 o'clock, he breathed his last, after having passed a night of horrible agony. The circumstances of his death and burial were hidden and mysterious. His body was immediately covered, and his funeral was hastened: it took place at 2 o'clock in the evening of the same day. Beza,‡ his favorite disciple, thus writes on the subject: "There were many strangers come from a distance, who wished greatly to see him, although he was dead, and made instance to that effect. . . But, to obviate all calumnies, he was put into the coffin at 8 o'clock in the morning, and at 2 o'clock in the evening was carried in the ordinary manner, as he himself had directed, to the common cemetery, called

* See his letter in full, Audin, vol. ii, p. 452, seq.
† It is given in full by Audin, ibid. p. 456, seq. ‡ Vie de Calvin.

'Plein Palais,' without any pomp or parade, where he lies at the present day, awaiting the resurrection." The "calumnies" to which Beza refers were probably the public rumors spread through the city regarding the manner of the reformer's death. "It was said that every one had been prohibited from entering into his chamber, because the body of the deceased bore traces of a desperate struggle with death, and of a premature decomposition, in which the eye would have seen either visible signs of the divine vengeance, or marks of a shameful disease; and that in consequence a black veil was hastily thrown over the face of the corpse, and that he was interred before the rumor of his death had spread through the city. So fearful were his friends of indiscreet looks!"*

The mystery was however penetrated by Haren, a young student who had visited Geneva to take lessons from Calvin. He penetrated into the chamber of the dying man, and has furnished the following evidence of what he saw on the occasion. And we beg our readers to bear in mind that he was no enemy, but a partisan of Calvin, and that his testimony was wholly voluntary. "Calvin, ending his life in despair, died of a most shameful and disgusting disease, which God has threatened to rebellious and accursed reprobates, having been first tortured in the most excruciating manner, and consumed, to which fact I can testify most certainly, for I, being present, saw with these eyes his most sad and tragical death." (*Exitum et exitium.*)†

In thus presenting to our readers an imperfect summary of facts, many of them extracted from the public and official acts of the Genevan council and consistory in the sixteenth century, we would not be understood as wishing to reflect upon the character or conduct of the

* Ibid. p. 464, seq.

† *Johannes Harennius, apud Petrum Cutzenum.* We have endeavored to give above a literal translation of his testimony, of which the original is in Latin.

present professors of Calvinistic doctrines, many of whom are men estimable for their civic virtues. It is not our fault that the truth of history will not warrant a better character of Calvin. He was the most subtle, the most untiring, and perhaps the most able enemy of the Catholic church. He played a public and conspicuous part in the great *religioso-politico* drama of the sixteenth century; he was the founder of a sect more distinguished than any other, perhaps, for its inveterate opposition to Catholicity. Under these circumstances, his life, acts, and whole character, are surely public property; and truth and justice required that they should be given to the public. This is precisely what M. Audin, and the Protestant historians of Geneva, Galiffe and Gaberel, have lately done; and, treading in their footsteps, we have only given a brief abstract of the result of their labors. If even one of those who have been seduced from the "faith once delivered to the saints," by the example or teaching of Calvin, should be induced seriously to reconsider the subject, we shall be fully recompensed for our labor.

Among the many proofs that the Catholic church is the church of Christ, not the least striking is the fact vouched for by authentic history, that all those who have left her bosom, and established religious sects, were men of very doubtful or of notoriously wicked and immoral characters. It is contrary to the order of God's providence to have selected men of this stamp, as the reformers of his church. This would derogate from his sanctity, and would reflect upon a religion which could be established, or *reformed*, by such instruments. This principle being once admitted, the inference from it is obvious. Whenever a change in religion—call it reformation, or what you will—has been effected by men not remarkable for their sanctity, the fact is of itself strong presumptive evidence that the change is not from God. If the men who effected it were notoriously flagitious, as most of the *soi disant* reformers of the sixteenth century were, then the presumption grows into a moral certainty.

CHAPTER XIV.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON LITERATURE.

"The march of intellect! what know we now
Of moral, or of thought and sentiment,
Which was not known three hundred years ago?
It is an empty boast, a vain conceit
Of folly, ignorance, and base intent."

Light and darkness—Boast of M. D'Aubigné—Two sets of barbarians—Catholic and Protestant art—The "painter of the reformation"—Two witnesses against D'Aubigné—Schlegel—Hallam—"Bellowing in bad Latin"—Testimony of Erasmus—Destruction of monasteries—Literary drought—Luther's plaint—Awful desolation—An "iron padlock"—Early Protestant schools—M. D'Aubigné's omissions—*Burning* zeal—Light and flame—Zeal for ignorance—Burning of libraries—Rothman and Omar—Disputatious theology—Its practical results—Morbid taste—The Stagirite—Mutual distrust—Case of Galileo—Liberty of the press—Old and new style—Religious wars—Anecdote of Reuchlin—Italy pre-eminent—Plaint of Leibnitz—Revival of letters—A shallow sophism—A parallel—Great inventions—Literary ages—Protestant testimony—Common schools.

It is one of the proudest boasts of the reformation that it gave a powerful impulse to literature and the arts. Before it, the world was sunk in utter darkness, religious and literary; after it, all was light and refinement. Before it, society remained stationary; after it, all was progression and improvement. But for the reformation, we would still have been immersed in worse than Egyptian darkness; we would have had neither science nor literature!

Such is the proudly boasting theory sustained by many superficial admirers of the reformation. We are not at all surprised to hear M. D'Aubigné singing the same old song which had been chaunted already *usque ad nauseam*, by those of his predecessors among Protestant historians,

who had sought to cater for vulgar prejudice. He gravely asserts "that the reformation not only communicated a mighty impulse to literature, but served to elevate the arts, although Protestantism has often been reproached as their enemy."* He laments that "many Protestants have willingly taken up and borne this reproach."† After devoting three pages to a tissue of highflown assertions and of special pleading to prove the "reproach unmerited," he winds up in this triumphant strain: "Thus every thing progressed—arts, literature, purity of worship, and the minds of prince and people."‡ If the reformation caused "the arts and literature" to progress no faster nor better than it did "the purity of worship, and the minds of prince and people," we greatly fear, from the many stubborn facts already adduced to elucidate the character of this latter progression, that the former was not rapid, nor even real.

The reformation favorable to the fine arts! As well might you assert that a conflagration is beneficial to a city which it consumes, or that the incursions of the northern barbarians, in the fifth and sixth centuries, were favorable to architecture, painting, sculpture, and the other fine arts. Wherever the reformation appeared, it pillaged, defaced, and often burnt churches and monasteries; it broke up and destroyed statues and paintings; and it often burnt whole libraries. Its ruthless vandalism spared none of the glories of the old Catholic art. Whatever was connected with the Catholic worship, or could serve as a memorial of old Catholic piety, was wantonly destroyed.

The armies of Goths and Vandals who overran Italy and sacked Rome fourteen centuries ago, did not manifest a more ruthless and destructive spirit than did the Lutheran army of the constable Bourbon, in their wanton pillage of Rome after the battle of Pavia in 1525. "Rome

* Vol. iii, p. 190. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 192.

had been taken and pillaged by the constable Bourbon: his army, which was composed in good part of Lutherans, had filled the holy city with abominations. The soldiers of this prince had changed the basilica of St. Peter into a stable, and given papal bulls as litter to their horses. . . . They burned even the grass, and sold the ears of their prisoners for their weight in gold. The eternal city would have been destroyed, had not God cast on it an eye of pity. He made use of the pestilence, which this horde of barbarians had spread on its journey, to banish them from Italy."*

Even the splendid creations of the genius of a Raphael, and of an Angelo, were not sacred in the eyes of this new northern horde. True, all this destruction took place in time of war; but its horrors had been increased tenfold by the religious fanaticism to which the reformation had given rise. We shall have occasion to prove, in the sequel, that similar enormities were perpetrated in time of peace, and under the sole pretext of religious zeal.

Thus the reformation destroyed many of the noblest works of art: what did it build up in their place? Did it produce architects like Fontana, Julio Romano, Bramante, Michael Angelo, and Bernini? Did it rear edifices to compare with those splendid Gothic piles scattered over Europe by the genius of Catholic architecture in the middle ages? or any thing that could vie with St. Peter's church at Rome? Did it substitute higher or nobler melody for the sublime Catholic music which it had proscribed? Did it give birth to painters and sculptors who could vie with Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, the two Caracci, Domenichino, Paul Veronese, Raphael, or Angelo?

M. D'Aubigné boasts of the pictorial skill of Lucas Kranach, Holbein, and Albert Durer.† We do not ques-

* Audin, Life of Luther, p. 289, who quotes Guicciardini—*Sacco di Roma*, Cochlæus, De Marillac, and Maimbourg, l. i. † III, 192.

tion the genius of the last two: but they learned their art and caught its inspiration in Catholic times. Their pencils were only occasionally employed on Protestant subjects. They were great artists before the reformation began, and they continued to be pre-eminent in their profession *in spite*, rather than in consequence, of its influence. As for Lucas Kranach, whom our author triumphantly styles "the painter of the reformation," he excelled chiefly in caricatures, in painting *pope-asses* and *monk-calves*, popes surrounded by a troop of demons, and priests and monks in all possible ridiculous garbs and attitudes. He was truly "the painter of the reformation," one just adapted to his subject; and the reformation is heartily welcome to all the credit it may have derived from *his* eminence.

To show what was the influence of the reformation on literature in general, we will adduce the testimony of two distinguished writers of the present century, against whose authority the flippant assertions of M. D'Aubigné will not weigh a feather with any enlightened or impartial man. Frederick Von Schlegel and Henry Hallam have both investigated this subject thoroughly, and have given to the world the result of their inquiry. The former may be styled the giant of modern literature: he has given a powerful impulse to learning and to Christian philosophy in Germany, and throughout the world. A German himself, and proud of his national literature, he has examined the subject of which we are treating in all its bearings. Though his great mind had escaped from the vagaries and endless variations of Protestantism in which he was raised, and sought repose in the bosom of Catholic unity, yet it was as free from undue prejudice as it was indefatigable in the inquiry after truth. We have seen already how greatly he admired the genius of Luther, in whose mind, however, he detected a tincture of insanity. In his writings, he speaks of the reformation always with calmness and dignified impartiality; some-

times even with praise of the good it may at least incidentally have occasioned.

Hallam is a Protestant, who, though generally impartial and accurate in his statements, is still sometimes betrayed into error by his ill concealed hostility to the Catholic church. He has just published a History of Literature during the sixteenth century, and the two immediately preceding and following. The plan of this work necessarily called for a thorough investigation of the subject of our present chapter; and he has given his opinion of the literary influence of the reformation with clearness and force. We make these remarks to show that both the witnesses whom we are about to bring up against M. D'Aubigné's theory, are weighty and unexceptionable.

Schlegel very properly designates the epoch of the reformation as the *barbaro-polemic*. "A third epoch now arose, which, from the general spirit of the age, and the tone of the writings which exerted a commanding influence over the times, cannot be otherwise designated than as the era of *barbaro-polemic* eloquence. This rude polemic spirit—which had its origin in the reformation, and in that concussion of faith, and, consequently, of all thought and of all science, which Protestantism occasioned—continued, down to the end of the seventeenth century, to prevail in the controversial writings and philosophic speculations both of Germany and England. This spirit was not incompatible with a sort of deep mystical sensibility, and a certain original boldness of thought and expression, such, for instance, as Luther's writings display; yet we cannot at all regard in a favorable light the general spirit of that intellectual epoch, or consider it as one by any means adapted to the intellectual exigencies of that age."*

He concludes his lecture on this epoch in the following words of just indignation: "When we hear the middle

* "Philosophy of History," vol. ii, p. 210, 211, edit. *ut supra*.

age called barbarous, we should remember that that epithet applies with far greater force to the truly barbarous era of the reformation, and of the religious wars which that event produced, and which continued down to the period when a sort of moral and political pacification was re-established, apparently at least, in society and the human mind."*

Hallam gives his opinion in still more explicit language. He says: "Nor, again, is there any foundation for imagining that Luther was concerned for the interests of literature. None had he himself, save theological; nor are there, as I apprehend, many allusions to profane studies, or any proof of his regard to them, in all his works. On the contrary, it is probable that both the principles of this great (!) founder of the reformation, and the natural tendency of so intense an application to theological controversy, checked for a time the progress of philological and philosophical literature on this side the Alps."†

A little further on, he thus speaks on the general literary influence of the reformation: "The first effects of the great religious schism in Germany were not favorable to classical literature. An all-absorbing subject left neither relish nor leisure for human studies. Those who had made the greatest advances in learning were themselves generally involved in theological controversy, and, in some countries, had to encounter either personal suffering on account of their opinions, or, at least, the jealousy of a church (*Protestant?*) that hated the advance of knowledge. The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was always liable to the suspicion of heterodoxy. In Italy, where classical literature was the chief object, this dread of learning could not subsist. But few learned much of Greek in these parts of Europe without some reference to

* Ibid. p. 216.

† "Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries," in 2 vols. 8vo, vol. i, p. 165, edit. Harper & Brothers, N. York, 1841.

theology, especially to the grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures. In those parts which embraced the reformation, a still more threatening danger arose from the intemperate fanaticism of its adherents. Men who interpreted the Scripture by the Spirit could not think human learning of much value in religion; and they were as little likely to perceive any other advantage it could possess. There seemed, indeed, a considerable peril that, through the authority of Carlostadt, or even of Luther, the lessons of Crocus and Mossellanus would be totally forgotten. And this would very probably have been the case if one man, Melancthon, had not perceived the necessity of preserving human learning as a bulwark to theology itself, against the wild waves of enthusiasm."*

In another place he asserts that "the most striking effect of the first preaching of the reformation was that it appealed to the ignorant."† He gives the following character of Luther's writings: "But from the Latin works of Luther few readers, I believe, will rise without disappointment. Their intemperance, their coarseness, their inelegance, their scurrility, their wild paradoxes, that menace the foundations of religious morality, are not compensated, so far at least as my slight acquaintance with them extends, by much strength or acuteness, and still less by any impressive eloquence. Some of his treatises, and we may instance his reply to Henry VIII, or the book against 'the falsely named order of bishops,' can be described as little else than *bellowing in bad Latin.* Neither of these books displays, so far as I can judge, any striking ability."

"It is not to be imagined," he continues, "that a man of his vivid parts fails to perceive an advantage in that close grappling, sentence by sentence, with an adversary, which fills most of his controversial writings: and in scornful irony he had no superior. His epistle to Eras-

* Ibid. p. 181, § 19.

† Ibid. p. 192, § 12.

mus, prefixed to his treatise *De servo arbitrio*, is bitterly insolent in terms as civil as *he* could use. But the clear and comprehensive line of argument which enlightens the reader's understanding and resolves his difficulties, is always wanting. An unbounded dogmatism, resting on the infallibility, practically speaking, of his own judgment, pervades his writings; no indulgence is shown, no pause allowed to the hesitating; whatever stands in the way of his decisions—the fathers of the church, the schoolmen and philosophers, the canons and councils—is swept away in a current of impetuous declamation: and, as every thing contained in Scripture, according to Luther, is easy to be understood, and can only be understood in his sense, every deviation from his doctrine incurs the anathema of perdition. Jerome, he says, far from being rightly canonized, must, but for some special grace, have been damned for his interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. That the Zuinglians, as well as the whole church of Rome, and the Anabaptists, were shut out by their tenets from salvation, is more than insinuated in numerous passages of Luther's writings. Yet he had passed himself through several changes of opinion. In 1518, he rejected auricular confession; in 1520, it was both useful and necessary; not long afterwards, it was again laid aside. I have found it impossible to understand or to reconcile his tenets concerning faith and works, &c."*

We might rest the whole case on the authority of the two learned witnesses just named: but we will proceed to show that their opinion is correct, because founded on the facts of history, and on the testimony of writers cotemporary with the reformation itself. Erasmus was the most distinguished literary character of Germany in the sixteenth century. He was an eye-witness of the earlier scenes in the great drama of the reformation. He will

* Ibid. p. 197, 198, § 26.

scarcely be suspected, when it is known that he was the intimate friend and correspondent of Melancthon and of other leading reformers, to whose party he was charged with leaning. He was certainly a competent judge of the literary influence of the reformation, and he was not disposed to undervalue that influence, even after his rupture with Luther.

The reformation had been *enlightening* the world for about ten years, when Erasmus wrote: "Wherever Lutheranism reigns, there literature utterly perishes."* In the same year, 1528, he employed the following language in one of his letters: "I dislike these gospellers on many accounts, but chiefly because, through their agency, literature every where languishes, disappears, lies drooping, and perishes: and yet, without learning, what is a man's life? They love good cheer and a wife; for other things they care not a straw."† In a letter to Melancthon, he states that "at Strasburg the Protestant party had publicly taught, in 1524, that it was not right to cultivate any science, and that no language should be studied except the Hebrew."‡

These grave charges of Erasmus were never answered, because they were, it would seem, too clearly founded in truth to admit of a reply. Had not Luther himself, the founder of the reformation, in his appeal to the German nobility, as early as 1520, openly taught that the works of Plato, Cicero, Aristotle, and of all the ancients, should be burnt, and that the time which was not devoted to the study of the Scriptures should be employed in manual labor?§ And we shall soon see that many of Luther's

* "Ubicumque regnat Lutheranismus, ibi literarum est interitus.' Epist. mvi, anno 1528. Apud Hallam ut sup. vol. i, p. 165.

† "Evangelicos istos, cum multis aliis, tum hoc nomine præcipuè odi, quòd per eos ubique languent, fugiunt, jacent, intereunt bonæ literæ, sine quibus quid est hominum vita? Amant viaticum et uxorem; cætera pili non faciunt." Epis. dcccxlvi, eod. anno. Apud Hallam, i, 165. ‡ Epist. 714 ad Melancthonem.

§ Epist. "ad nobiles Germanicæ," anno 1520. See Robelot, p. 358.

disciples took him at his word, and that the early history of the reformation more than justifies the accusations of Erasmus.

One of the first effects of the reformation in Germany was the secularization and destruction of the monasteries, and the expulsion of the bishops from their sees. This measure of violence was most disastrous to literature. In Catholic times there were flourishing schools established in all the principal monasteries, as well as near all the Cathedral and many of the parochial churches. Literature had been ever cultivated under the shadow of the Catholic church. Popes and councils, almost without number, had, during the middle ages, enforced the obligation of establishing such schools throughout christendom.* In those Catholic institutions, reared in Catholic times, and by the express injunction of the Catholic church, all the distinguished men of Germany in the sixteenth century had been educated: Reuchlin, Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Œcolampadius, Bucer, Eck, Emser, Zuingle, and others. The reformation was thus indebted to them for all its leading champions.

When the monasteries were destroyed, and the cathedral churches desecrated and dismantled, all those flourishing schools were abolished: and the funds for their support, accumulated by the liberality of previous ages, were devoured by the avarice of the reformation party. Hundreds of flourishing colleges and academies of learning were thus destroyed at one fell swoop. No wonder "literature drooped and perished wherever Lutheranism reigned!" The fountains of Catholic learning, ever open and flowing by the side of the Catholic church and monastery, having been thus suddenly dried up, all Germany was made desolate with a literary drought and sterility. Did the reformation, during the first fifty years of its his-

* See many proofs of this assertion accumulated in an article in the Catholic Cabinet of St. Louis, number for December, 1843.

tory, give birth to even *one* great literary character, if we except those who had been reared under Catholic auspices? If it did, we have yet to learn his name and local habitation.*

Luther himself was appalled at the extent of the desolation which his own recklessness had caused. In his own characteristic style, he poured forth a plaintive jeremiad, mingled with bitter invective and reproach against the leaders of the Protestant party. He lashed without mercy the avarice of the princes, who, after having devoured the substance of the church and the funds of the Catholic schools, closed their purses, and refused to contribute to the erection of establishments to replace those they had thus wantonly annihilated. "Others," he says, "close their hands, and refuse to provide for their pastor and preacher, and even to support them. If Germany will act thus, I am ashamed to be one of her children, and to speak her language: and if I were permitted to impose silence on my conscience (!), I would call in the pope, and assist him and his minions to forge new chains for us, to subject us to new tortures, and to injure us more than before."

"Formerly," he continues, "when we were the slaves of Satan, when we profaned the blood of Christ, all purses were open. Money could be procured for endowing churches, for raising seminaries, for maintaining superstitions. Then nothing was spared to put children in the cloister, to send them to school; but now, when we must raise pious academies, and endow the church of Jesus Christ—endow, did I say, no, but assist in preserving her, for it is the Lord who has founded this church, and who watches over her—now that we know the divine word, and that we have learned to honor the word of our Martyr-God, the purses are closed with iron padlocks!

* The first that we know of are Scaliger, Casaubon, and Grotius, who flouished a hundred years after the beginning of the reformation, the two last of whom were almost Catholics.

No one wishes to give any thing! The children are neglected, and no one teaches them to serve God, to venerate the blood of Jesus, while they are joyfully immolated to mammon.* The blood of Jesus is trampled under foot! And these are Christians! No schools! no cloisters! 'The grass is withered, and the flower is fallen,' (*Isaiah.*) Now-a-days, when these carnal men are secure from the apprehensions of seeing their sons abandon them, and their daughters enter the convent, deprived of their patrimonies, there is no one who cultivates the understanding of children! 'What would they learn,' say they, 'when they are to be neither priests nor monks?' "

He made a strong appeal to the Protestant princes of Germany to induce them to found schools and academies. He told them that it was "their duty to *oblige* the cities and villages to raise schools, found masterships, and support pastors, as they are bound to make bridges and roads, and to raise public edifices. I would wish, if possible," he adds, "to leave these men without preacher and pastor, and let them live like swine. There is no longer any fear or love of God among them. After throwing off the yoke of the pope, every one wishes to live as he pleases. But it is the duty of all, especially of the prince, to bring up youth in the fear and love of the Lord, and to provide them with teachers and pastors. If the old people care not for these things, let them go to the d—l. But it would be a shame for the government to let the youth wallow in the mire of ignorance and vice."†

This attempt to compel the people to support, by heavy taxation, institutions which had been reared and maintained by Catholic charity hitherto, seems to have been little acceptable either to princes or people. Luther's voice, which had been omnipotent when it preached up

* See Ad. Menzel, (a Protestant,) *ut supra,* tom. i, p. 231.

† Luther, Werke, edit. Altenberg, tom. iii, 519. Reinhardt—*Sämmtliche Reformations predigten,* tom. iii. p, 445.

destruction and spoliation, now fell powerless, when it was at length raised to enforce the necessity of liberal contribution for the rearing of institutions to replace those which had been wantonly destroyed. When his eloquence filled men's pockets, it was effectual for persuasion: when it was employed to empty them, it was a different matter altogether: the purses of his hearers were closed with "the iron padlock" which he himself had constructed!

Few and feeble were the efforts made by early Protestantism to rear schools and colleges. Erasmus bears evidence to their utter failure even when they were made. "These gospellers also hate me," he says, "because I said that their gospel cooled down the love of literature. In reply, they point to Nüremberg, where the professors of polite literature are liberally rewarded. Be it so: but if you ask the inhabitants, they will tell you that these professors have few scholars, and that the masters are as indisposed to teach, as the students to learn; *so that the scholars, no less than the professors, will have to be paid for their attendance.* I know not what will result from all these city and village schools; hitherto I have not met with any one who profited by them."*

It is curious to observe how M. D'Aubigné passes over altogether, or how very *delicately* he alludes to these stubborn facts in reference to the literary tendency of the reformation. They did not suit his taste, and did not come within the scope of his history! He speaks with great praise of the effort made by Luther to have schools established throughout Germany by law; but he carefully refrains from telling his readers of the literary desolation which Luther so strongly deplored, though himself had brought it about! He omits entirely, or strives to palliate the destructive spirit of early Protestantism, which, with

* "In Pseudo-Evangelicos." Epist. xlvii, lib. xxxi, edit. London Flesher.

more than Vandalic fury, swept away from the face of the earth schools and academies, and burnt monasteries and libraries, both public and private. A volume might be filled with instances of this violence: we will select a few by way of supplying somewhat the manifold omissions of our *romantic* historian.

When on his way to the diet of Worms, in 1521, Luther passed through the town of Erfurth, in the Augustinian convent of which place he had passed many years of his early life. The people received him with open arms. He made a most inflammatory harangue in the parish church, where he was wont to preach of old; and so great was the effect of his eloquence, that "a few weeks after his departure, the populace made a furious attack on the residence of the canons, and destroyed every thing they met with—*books, images, paintings,* furniture, beds, the feathers of which fell, like a thick snow, on the streets, and obscured for a moment the brightness of the day."*

This was but one out of a hundred examples of similar outrage, enacted not only under the eyes of Luther, but often with his connivance and consent. The work of destruction went on, until there was scarcely left in all Protestant Germany one of the many splendid monuments reared by the old Catholic literature and art. "Those illuminated manuscripts—those ancient crucifixes, carved in wood and ivory—those episcopal rings, the gifts of popes and emperors—those rich vestments, painted glass, gold and silver ciboria—in a word, all the relics of the middle ages, which are exhibited in the rich museums of Germany, were in great part the property of the convents. To get possession of them, the monks were secularized. After three centuries, nothing better calculated to give us an idea of German art at that period has been thought of, than to exhibit the remains of those

* Lutheri Opp. tom. i, fol. 704, edit. Altenb. Apud Audin, p. 158.

whom the reformers robbed when living, and calumniated when dead!"* And yet these are but a miserable remnant of those vast literary and artistic treasures which the reformation utterly destroyed!

In Switzerland,† as elsewhere, violence was the order of the day. The reformation triumphed amidst the ruins with which it had strewn the earth! "Zuingle ascended the pulpit, and declaimed against images, which, he said, were condemned by the law of Moses and the gospel, as this latter did not revoke the command of the Hebrew legislator. Not only were paintings and statues mutilated and destroyed wherever the reformation gained partisans, but the flames were fed by the *manuscripts* in which generations of monks had, in the solitude of their cloisters, endeavored to represent, in colors that time could not efface, the principal scenes of human redemption. Even in private houses the hammer's stroke fell on those painted windows which modern art endeavors unsuccessfully to revive"‡

M. D'Aubigné furnishes us with a curious instance of this destructive fanaticism at Zurich. The hero of the story is Thomas Plater, whom he eulogizes to the skies, though he feebly disapproves of his conduct in the incident in which he was the actor. "The light of the gospel quickly found its way to his heart (!). One morning, when it was very cold, and fuel was wanted to heat the school-room stove, which it was his office to tend, he said to himself: 'Why need I be at a loss for wood when there are so many idols in the church?' The church was then empty, though Zuingle was expected to preach (!), and the bells were already ringing to summon the congregation. Plater entered with a noiseless step, grappled an image of St. John, which stood over one of the altars, carried it off, and thrust it into the stove, saying, as he

* Audin, p. 365.

† See the chapter on the reformation in Switzerland.

‡ Idem, ibid. p. 204. See also Erasmus, lib. xix, epist. iv.

did so, 'Down with thee, for in thou must go.' Certainly neither Myconius nor Zuingle would have applauded such an act."* What! when "the light of the gospel had found its way to his heart!" Who could blame him for following that light, and even for kindling it into a flame?

Our author also informs us of the fanatical hatred of learning by Karlstadt and the prophets who headed the revolt of the peasants. "But soon after this, Karlstadt went to still greater lengths; he began to pour contempt upon human learning; and the students heard their aged tutor advising them, from his rostrum, to return to their homes, and resume the spade, or follow the plough, and cultivate the earth, because man was to eat bread in the sweat of his brow! George Mohr, master of the boys' school at Wittemberg, carried away by a similar madness, called from his window to the burghers outside to come and remove their children. Where indeed was the use of their continuing their studies, since Storck and Stübner had never been at the university, and yet were prophets? A mechanic was just as well, nay, perhaps better qualified than all the divines in the world, to preach the gospel!"†

Who can calculate the mischief these doctrines did to literature? Who can estimate the literary treasures which were annihilated in the bloody war of the peasants, led on by men who openly avowed their hostility to all human learning? In their ravages of Germany, before their revolt was finally stifled in their own blood, they had enacted scenes which would have put to the blush the Gothic armies of old!

Another class of fanatics, the Anabaptists, to whose fanaticism the principles of the reformation had manifestly led, were no less inimical to learning. Having seized on the city of Munster, from which they had ex-

* Vol. iii, p. 253. † Ibid. p. 61.

pelled the prince bishop, they issued an order to devastate the churches, which was accordingly done. They then went farther. In the mad intoxication of triumph, "a manifesto, published by Rothmann, decided that as there was only one book necessary to salvation, the bible, all others should be burned, as useless or dangerous. Two hours afterwards, the library of Rudolph Langius, consisting almost entirely of Greek and Latin manuscripts, perished in the flames."* The Caliph Omar, for a similar reason, had ordered the great library of Alexandria to be burned, A. D. 632! A fine example truly, faithfully followed!

But it was not merely by acts of violence that the reformation injured the cause of literature; it brought into action many other influences highly prejudicial to the progress of learning. We shall briefly advert to some of the principal of these, and will begin with that already referred to by Mr. Hallam.

The reformation fevered the minds of men with religious controversy. It drew off the votaries of literature from the academic groves and the Pierian springs, into the arid and thorny paths of disputatious theology. Though many of the theological disputants, who appeared on the arena at the period of the reformation, obtained great credit for themselves and their cause by their writings, yet it is certain, that the literary world, at least, would have been more benefited, had they devoted their mental energies to the prosecution of scientific studies. There is no doubt, that from this cause, the ranks of the *literati*, both among Catholics and Protestants, were greatly thinned; and that in consequence the ardor for literary pursuits greatly cooled. Had the world continued in unity, and had no acrimonious controversies arisen, such men as Luther, Bucer, Melancthon, Eck, Emser, and Bellarmine, might have contributed very greatly to the progress of letters.

* See *Histoire des Anabaptistes*, par Catrou, Liv. ii; and Audin p. 460.

To show how this cause practically operated to the detriment of literature, we will furnish a few facts, selected almost at random from many of the same kind. We have seen how the fanaticism of the Anabaptists destroyed letters and burnt an extensive library in the city of Munster. It is curious to trace the beginning of this fanaticism, and to mark its influence on literature in that city. Before the appearance of Luther, Munster enjoyed peace and tranquillity, and cultivated learning with great success. Shortly after the commencement of the reformation, the scene changed altogether.

"It suddenly became," says M. Audin, "a city of trouble and disorder—was restless and uneasy under its obscurity, and aspired to be the rival of Wittemberg. It was a rich and commercial city, and had cultivated literature with success. Its University had merited the attention of the literary world. It loved antiquity, especially Greece, whose poets it published and elucidated. This was the passion until the disciples of Luther entered its gates, when this demi-classic city—half Greek and half Latin, by its morals and instincts—involved itself in theological disputes, and abandoned the study of Cicero and Homer, to become interpreter of the sacred volume. It is needless to say, that it found in these inspired writings many things that our fathers never dreamed of. Then all the classic divinities abandoned Munster, as the swallows fly away in winter, only that they did not intend to return. In their place, an acrimonious and punctilious theology destroyed the peace of scholars, masters, and people. The revolutionary progress of sectarians is always the same."*

Whoever will read attentively the history of the reformation, will be struck with the truth of this last remark of M. Audin. In almost every city of Germany where the reformation made its appearance, it produced, to a

* Audin "Life of Luther," p. 458.

greater or less extent, the same disastrous revolution in literary taste, which it effected in Munster.

Even Charles Villers, one of the most unscrupulous advocates of the reformation, admits that "the attention of the literary world was turned away, for more than a century (after the reformation) unto miserable disputes about dogmas and confessions of faith."* Controversy was not only carried on between the champions of Catholicity, and of Protestantism, but it raged violently in the bosom of the reformation party. Men, who might have been of immense service to the republic of letters, wasted their energies in sectarian contentions. For more than six years a violent dispute was carried on between the Lutherans and Calvinists on the subject of the Eucharist, and at the close of it, they were more widely separated than ever. Leibnitz tells us, that a single controversy between two Protestant divines of Leipsic, *on the peremptory period of repentance*, gave rise to more than fifty treatises in Latin and German.†

The eagerness for religious controversy among the earlier Protestants of Germany, forcibly reminds us of the picture which St. Gregory of Nyssa draws of a similar rage of disputation on the subject of the Trinity, among the sectarians of Constantinople under the Emperor Theodosius the Great. "If you wish to change a piece of money," says he, "you are first entertained with a long discourse on the difference of the Son who is born, and of the Son who is not born. If you ask the price of bread, you are answered, 'that the Father is greater, and that the Son is less:' and if you ask, when will the bath be warm? you are seriously assured, 'that the Son was created.'"‡

It is a singular fact, that notwithstanding the invectives of Luther against the philosophy of Aristotle, it was still retained in most of the Protestant Universities of Ger-

* "Essai sur l'Influence," &c. *ut sup.* p. 276.

† "Commercii Epist. Leibnitziani, Selecta Specimina—Hanoveræ. 1805, Epist. xcv. ‡ Apud Robelot, p. 390, *sup. cit.*

many, and even made the standard of disputation. Melancthon published commentaries on the writings of the Stagirite, and the authority of the latter was greatly respected by the German Protestant Universities, as late as the close of the eighteenth century. Ramus was refused a professorship at Geneva, because he would not adopt the philosophy of Aristotle, which was still taught in this cradle of Calvinism.* While Protestant Germany was thus sternly upholding the system of philosophy, which Luther had decried and endeavored to banish from Christendom, the new school of the Platonic philosophy was established in Italy, under the auspices of the Medici. All the invectives of the reformers against the subtle disputations of the schoolmen, who had adopted the Aristotelian philosophy, thus fell back on the heads of their own party.

The mutual distrust and suspicion, which the reformation sowed in the minds of men, constituted another serious obstacle to the progress of letters. Competition and emulation often elicit talent and promote improvement; but when this feeling degenerates into a suspicious jealousy, and mutual hatred, it greatly retards advancement in learning. Whatever new systems of literature or of philosophy were broached by one religious party, were often rejected, through a mere spirit of opposition, by the other. When mankind were united in religious faith, they worked in unison for the promotion of learning: when they were split up into religious parties, they mutually thwarted and hindered each other. The endless variations and vagaries of protestantism, on the one hand, led to a skepticism, which sneered at every system which savored of antiquity, no matter how well grounded; and the cautious dread of innovation by the Catholic church, on the other hand, caused her sometimes to view with suspicion, at least for a time, new systems of philosophy

* Beza, Epist. xxxvi, p. 202. Apud Robelot, p. 362.

which were sustained by respectable, if not conclusive arguments. An example of the former feeling—of skepticism—is given by the French philosopher Maupertuis, who tells us that it required a half century to satisfy the learned as to the truth of the principle of attraction, which was at first viewed as reviving a feature of the occult sciences, so extensively cultivated in previous centuries.*

A remarkable instance of the dread of innovation on the part of the Catholic church, is presented by the well known case of Galileo. The wanton abuse of the scriptures, for the support of a thousand conflicting opinions, by the disciples of the reformation, had rendered every species of innovation, which was attempted to be proved by their authority, an object of apprehension on the part of Rome. It may be confidently asserted, that, but for the reformation, and for the attempt by Galileo to prove his system, not merely as a specious theory, but as incontestably true, by the authority of the written word, he would never have been molested.

Some time before Galileo, Cardinal Nicholas de Cusa had openly defended the system of Philolaus and Pythagoras, on the motion of the earth; and no one then thought of opposing his theory on religious grounds. Nearly a century before Galileo, Nicholas Copernicus, a Catholic priest, had advocated the same theory: and he was not only not opposed, but Pope Paul III† approved of the dedication to himself of his great work "on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies."‡ How are we then to explain that a system, which was thus openly maintained

* Apud Robelot, p. 355.

† A copy of the original work of Copernicus is preserved in the British Museum. It was printed at Nüremberg, by John Petreius, at the expense of Card'l Nicholas Schomberg, the Cardinal of Capua. In the beginning of the volume is printed a laudatory letter of the Cardinal to Copernicus, dated Rome, 1st of November, 1536.

‡ "De Orbium Cœlestium Revolutionibus." Folio—1543, p. 196.

for nearly a century, by cardinals and priests, at Rome itself, where Copernicus had been professor of Astronomy—and all this, without any opposition—was afterwards viewed with suspicion, when too warmly advocated by Galileo?

The reason is manifest: the wanton abuse of the scriptures by the partisans of the reformation had made Rome suspicious of every thing which savored of novelty. Ambitious rivals, whom the literary fame of Galileo had eclipsed, had also represented his system in an odious and false light to the Roman Court: they had painted it as opposed to the scriptures, to the testimony of which Galileo on the other hand as confidently appealed. The whole issue was thus made on scriptural grounds. Rome took the alarm, and, without precisely condemning the system of Galileo as false, enjoined silence on the disputants. Galileo remained in Rome from February to July, 1633, a space of more than five months, during which time he resided at the spacious palace of his special friend, the Tuscan Ambassador, who was his surety during the trial. For only four days at most, even according to the testimony of Mr. Drinkwater, his Protestant historian, he was in nominal confinement; being "honorably lodged in the apartments of the fiscal of the Inquisition."*

The reckless abuse of the scripture, by the reformation, and the distrust thereby occasioned, are thus alone responsible for this temporary check to scientific improvement in the person of Galileo. But, on the other hand, as an offset to the case of the Italian philosopher, did not the Protestant astronomer, Tycho Brahe, invent, on scriptural grounds, a system, at variance with the Copernican, and now universally rejected, though then popular among Protestants? And was not his great disciple Kepler, as well as himself, persecuted by Protestants, for his valuable discoveries in Astronomy?

* Drinkwater—Life of Galileo, p. 58, and p. 64.

The authority of an unexceptionable witness, Mr. Hallam, greatly confirms the view just taken of the case of Galileo. He says: "For eighty years, it has been said, this theory of the earth's motion had been maintained, without censure; and it could only be the greater boldness of Galileo in its assertion which drew down upon him the notice of the church."* In a note,† he disproves the assertion of Drinkwater—"that Galileo did not endeavor to prove his system compatible with Scripture;" and adds: "it seems, in fact, to have been this *over desire* to prove his theory orthodox, which incensed the church against it. See an extraordinary article on this subject in the eighth number of the Dublin Review."‡ Guicciardini, an ardent disciple of Galileo, in a letter dated March 4th, 1616, says, "that he had demanded of the Pope and the Holy Office to declare the system of Copernicus founded on the Bible." At Rome, Galileo was treated most kindly by the Pope and the Cardinals, as he himself testifies in a letter to his disciple Receneri, written in 1633.‖

The restrictions on the liberty of the press were also often injurious to the progress of learning. Protestant governments in Europe have been, and are even at this day, deserving of at least as much censure on this subject as those of Catholic countries. The supposed necessity for a censorship of the press, frequently originated in the wanton abuse of it by those who had adopted the principles of the reformation. But for the mutual distrust which this revolution caused to arise in the minds of men, the press would have been free, or at least much less restricted than it really was. We read of little or no restriction on the liberty of the press, until some time after the reformation; though the art of printing had been

* "History of Literature," ii, 248. † Ibid. p. 249.

‡ See also the article *Sciences Humaines* in Bergier's Dictionary which sheds much light on this whole transaction.

‖ Published in the "Mercure de France," July 17, 1784.

in successful operation for more than half a century. Thus the reformation is fairly chargeable, at least in a great measure, with having originated that very censorship of the press, which is so often the burden of the invectives of its partisans against the Catholic church.

But perhaps the most singular instance of the obstacles thrown in the way of literary improvement by the reformation, is that furnished by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant governments of Europe, to the change in the Calendar adopted by Pope Gregory XIII, in the year 1582. The correction of the Calendar was founded on the clearest and most incontestable principles of Astronomy; and yet, solely because the improvement emanated from Rome, England refused to adopt it for 170 years, until 1752; Sweden adopted the new style, a year later, in 1753, and the German states, the cradle of the reformation, only in 1776! As a distinguished writer has caustically remarked, the Protestant potentates preferred "warring with the stars, to agreeing with the Pope!"

The long and bloody religious wars, which the reformation caused, or at least occasioned in Germany, were another very serious hindrance to the progress of learning. These wars continued at intervals for nearly 150 years, until the great treaty of Westphalia in 1648; and they filled all Germany with wide-spread desolation. The war of extermination against the peasants—the bloody war against the Anabaptists—the wars of Charles V, and the Protestant princes of Germany—and finally, the awful thirty years' war—from 1618 to 1648—between the Catholic party headed by the house of Austria, and the Protestant party led on chiefly by the Kings of Sweden—made all Germany a scene of turmoil, confusion and bloodshed. How many of the monuments of ancient literature and art were swept away during all this bloody strife! How many cities were desolated, libraries burnt, and men of eminence slain! In the midst of a bloody civil war, with danger constantly at their very door, men

had neither leisure nor inclination to apply to literary pursuits. Apollo courts peace: he seldom wears laurels stained with blood.

We may safely affirm, that, for the reasons hitherto alleged, and more particularly the last, the reformation retarded the literary progress of Germany for at least a century. Any one will be convinced of this, who will compare the literary history of Germany in the beginning of the sixteenth, with what it was in the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century. At the dawn of the reformation, German literature was in a most promising condition. Greek, Latin and Hebrew learning had revived, and were beginning to be cultivated with success. Reuchlin, Budæus and Erasmus had filled Germany with literary glory.

An anecdote of Reuchlin, related by M. D'Aubigné, may serve to give us some idea of the extent to which Greek literature was then carried in Germany. In 1498 —twenty years before the reformation—he was sent to Rome as ambassador from the electoral court of Saxony. "An illustrious Greek, Argyropylos, was explaining in that metropolis, to a numerous auditory, the wonderful progress his nation had formerly made in literature. The learned ambassador went with his suite to the room where the master was teaching, and on his entrance saluted him, and lamented the misery of Greece, then languishing under Turkish despotism. The astonished Greek asked the German: 'whence come you, and do you understand Greek?' Reuchlin replied: 'I am a German, and am not quite ignorant of your language.' At the request of Argyropylos, he read and explained a passage of Thucydides, which the professor happened to have before him; upon which Argyropylos cried out in grief and astonishment: 'alas! alas! Greece cast out and fugitive, is gone to hide herself beyond the Alps!'"* Had Argyropylos visited

* Vol. i, p. 96.

Germany a century later, he would probably have found that "fugitive Greece which had hid herself beyond the Alps," had been ruthlessly driven from her shelter in Germany, by the myrmidons of the reformation!

At the commencement of the reformation, many German princes were liberal patrons of learning. Among these, the most conspicuous, were the Emperor Maximilian; Frederick, Elector of Saxony, who founded the University of Wittemberg in 1502; Joachim, Elector of Brandenburg, who established the University of Frankfort on the Oder, in 1506; Albert, Archbishop of Mentz; and George, Duke of Saxony.* But the troubles occasioned by the doctrines of the reformers, caused the German princes to turn their attention more to camps and battlefields, than to the seats of learning and the patronage of learned men.

Italy had led the way in literary improvement. Hallam says: "the difference in point of learning between Italy and England was at least that of a century: that is, the former was more advanced in knowledge of ancient literature in 1400 than the latter was in 1500."† In another place, speaking of the relative encouragement of literature by Italy and Germany, he has this remarkable passage: "Italy was then (in the beginning of the sixteenth century), and perhaps, *has been ever since*, the soil where literature, if it has not always most flourished, has stood highest in general estimation."‡ This avowal is the more precious as coming from a Protestant, and an Englishman.

Speaking of the history of literature from the year 1520 to 1550, he pays this just tribute to the literary ascendency of Italy: "Italy, the genial soil where the literature of antiquity had been first cultivated, still retained her superiority in the fine perception of its beauties, and in the

* See Hallam—History of Literature, &c. *sup. cit.* i, 159.
† Ibid. p. 145, § 8. ‡ Ibid. p. 159, § 48.

power of retracing them by spirited imitation. It was the land of taste and sensibility; never surely more so, than in the age of Raphael as well as Ariosto."*

Literary societies for the promotion of learning were formed much later in Germany than in Italy and France. It was only in 1617, that the "fruitful society," the first that ever existed in Germany, was established at Weimar.† The example of Italy would have been in all probability much sooner followed, had not the reformation engaged the public attention in other pursuits. The spirit of Reuchlin and of Erasmus had disappeared: their refined taste was superseded by that which Schlegel so happily designates the *barbaro-polemic;* and the result was the retarding of literary improvement in the manner we have stated.

From the dawn of the reformation to the reign of Frederick the Great—a period of more than two hundred years—Germany was behind the other principal countries of Europe in learning: it required full two hundred years for her to recover from the rude shock her literature had received from the hands of the reformers! In 1715, the great Leibnitz feelingly deplored this literary desolation of his country.‡ He says in another place, that the relish for philosophical pursuits was so rare in Germany, "that he could not find any person in his country, who had a taste for philosophy and mathematics, and with whom he could converse."§ Even as late as 1808, M. Jacobi, another Protestant writer, draws a frightful picture of the moral and literary condition of the German Protestant Universities during his time.‖

It is very common to find it boldly asserted from the pulpit and through the press, that the revival of letters in

* Ibid. p. 173, § 1. † Idem. vol. ii, p. 172.

‡ See his letter to M. Bignon, 22d June, 1715—Commercii Epist. Leibnitz. Selecta Specimina—*sup. cit.* Epist. xciv.

§ Letter to M. de Beauval—ibid. Ep. xxv.

‖ See his testimony in Robelot, p. 421, 422.

Europe was brought about by the reformation! Nothing could be more unfounded in fact, and more utterly absurd, than this assertion. To Italy, under the fostering protection of her Medici, her Gonzagas, her Estes, and her Popes, and more especially Nicholas V and Leo X, do we in a great measure owe the revival of learning in Europe. All persons of any information admit this. Roscoe, an English Protestant, has written an extensive work to do honor to the pontificate of Leo X, which he proves to have been the golden age of learning.* Hallam also pays a splendid tribute to this second Augustan age of literature.† A light then shot up in Italy—in Rome its brightness was most dazzling—which illumined the whole world! Nor was it the first time that Rome had led the way in improvement and civilization!

The impulse having been thus powerfully given, all Europe was rapidly advancing in learning. The progress was steady and healthy. On a sudden, the storm of the reformation broke in upon the tranquillity of Europe, which was peacefully and calmly engaged in literary pursuits. The result was almost the same as that of a violent and long continued storm on a beautiful garden, fragrant with flowers and rich in fruits. The fruits of previous toil were rudely shaken down ere they had become mature; the flowers were blighted; and the garden was changed into a desert! If literature was still preserved, it was in *spite* of the reformation!

The usual argument of those who maintain that the reformation was the cause of the literary resurrection of Europe, is founded on a comparison of the condition of Europe before, with what it became, after the reformation. Literature was in a more flourishing condition *after*, than *before* the sixteenth century: *therefore*, the reformation caused the change for the better. Never was there a more

* Roscoe—Life and Pontificate of Leo X, *sup. cit.*

† Vol. i, p. 148, seqq. See also Audin, Life of Luther, p. 124, seqq.

shallow sophism. It belongs to the category: *post hoc, ergo propter hoc.** To estimate the literary influence of the reformation aright, we should compare the literary state of Europe before the reformation, with what it *would have been* afterwards, if the reformation had not intervened: or more properly; we should compare the progress which Europe *really* made after the reformation, especially in Protestant countries, with what it would have made, but for the reformation. Abiding by this test, we fearlessly assert, on the authority of the facts and evidence above adduced, that the literary influence of the reformation was most disastrous.

We do not pretend to deny that Protestantism has produced many illustrious literary characters. Catholicism has produced at least as great men, and many more of them. Galileo and La Place may compare advantageously with Huygens and Newton: and Copernicus far outshines Tycho Brahe. The latter, though a Protestant, was encouraged chiefly by Catholic potentates of Germany. Among philosophers, if Bacon and Descartes were weighed in the balance, the latter would probably preponderate. It would lead us too far, to continue this comparison through all its details. But we may ask, whether the annals of Protestant literature can produce brighter names than Cardinal Ximenes, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Herrera and Calderon in Spain; Bossuet, Fenelon, Racine, Moliere and Legendre, in France; Raphael, Michael Angelo, Vida, Tasso, Muratori, Tiraboschi, Boscovitch, and a countless host of others in Italy; Frederick von Schlegel, Möeller, and Görres in Germany; and Pope, Dryden, and Lingard and Moore, in England and Ireland? These are but a few, selected almost at random, from the long list of Catholic literati.

In regard to inventions of great and permanent utility

* "*After* this; therefore *on account* of this." Never was a *therefore* more misapplied.

to mankind, a far greater number was made by Catholics than by Protestants. The mariner's compass, gun powder, the art of printing, clocks and watches, as well as steamboat navigation,* were all invented by Catholics. To them also belongs the glory of having discovered America, and of having first doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and discovered the Indies. The microscope, the telescope, the thermometer, the barometer, were all invented by Catholics. The chief great discoveries in astronomy—that of Jupiter's satellites, of spots in the sun, and of the four new planets or asteroids—were all made by Catholics. Modern poetry was first cultivated successfully in Italy by Dante and Petrarch; and Blair admits, that in historical writing the Italians excel all other people.

The paper on which we write, the use of window glass and the art of staining it, the weaving of cloth, the art of enamelling on ivory and metals, the discovery of stone coal, the sciences of galvanism and mineralogy; and many other improvements were introduced by Catholics: most of them in the "dark" ages! And it may be confidently asserted, on the faith of genuine history, that during the three hundred years preceding the reformation, more great and important inventions were made, than during the three hundred centuries succeeding that revolution! And yet, we are to be told, that we owe all our literature and improvement to the reformation!

We may here also remark, that the two great epochs of modern literature—that of Leo X and of Louis XIV—both occurred in Catholic countries and under Catholic auspices. The age of Frederick the Great, in Germany, was nearly allied in character with that which immediately followed it under the influence of the infidels of France:

* Blasco de Garay, a Spaniard, made the first successful experiment in steam navigation, in the harbor of Barcelona, in the year 1543. Eighty-five years later, Brancas followed up the discovery in Italy. See "A Year in Spain" by an American Protestant, vol. i, p. 47, seq. *Note.*—Edit. New York, 1830.

while the literary glories of Queen Ann's reign in England, were equalled, if they were not surpassed, by those of the Age of Ferdinand and Isabella, in Spain.

We will conclude this chapter, already long enough, with a few extracts from modern Protestant writers, bearing on our present subject. The first will be from Blackwood's Magazine, a print remarkable for its great ability, and for its bitter hostility to the Catholic church. Mark how the writer speaks of the influence of the reformation on literature.

"The pontificate of Leo X, commenced in 1513. His patronage of literature is too well known to be long dwelt on; yet, during his life, literature was fated to receive *the severest check which it had yet received. This was occasioned by the reformation*, whose dawn, while it shed light (!!) upon the regions of theology, looked frowningly on those of profane learning. In fact, the all-important controversy then at issue, so thoroughly engrossed the minds of men, as to divert them, for a while, from other studies. The quick eye of Erasmus perceived this, and casting down the weapons of theological strife, which he had grasped in the enthusiasm of the first onset, he left the field, exclaiming in a tone of heartfelt anguish—'*Ubicumque regnat Lutheranismus, ibi literarum est interitus*'—'wherever Lutheranism prevails, there learning perishes.'"* The writer then gives other quotations from Erasmus and Hallam, which we have cited above. This testimony of an enemy is unexceptionable and conclusive.

Our second Protestant witness is William Cobbett, whom we cite, not so much for the weight of his personal authority, as for the important facts he alleges, and which have never been disproved, probably because they could not be called in question. He makes an elaborate comparison, in regard to literature, between Protestant England, and

* P. 465.

Catholic France and Italy. His parallel embraces one hundred and eighty-seven years, from 1600 to 1787. His authority for the statement he makes, is a Protestant work, universally read in England—the "Universal Historical, Critical, and Bibliographic Dictionary." Though our business is chiefly with Germany, yet the facts which we will now disclose in regard to England, will tend not a little to throw light on the general literary tendency of the reformation. England has boasted more perhaps than any other Protestant country, of her superior enlightenment and refinement: and if it appear on indubitable Protestant authority, that even *she* must yield the literary palm to Catholic France and Italy, we may readily infer, what is, relatively to these last named states, the literary excellence of Germany and of other Protestant countries.

The authority from which Cobbett derives the following table allowed a place on its pages only to great and distinguished names. The figures in the table denote the number of writers in each country who have excelled in the respective branches opposite which their names are placed.

	England.	France.	Italy.
Writers on Law.....	6	51	9
Mathematicians.....	17	52	15
Physicians and Surgeons...	13	72	21
Writers on Natural History	6	33	11
Historians.....	21	139	22
Dramatic Writers.....	19	66	6
Grammarians.....	7	42	2
Poets.....	38	157	34
Painters.....	5	64	44
Total.....	132	676	164

The reader may make his own comments on this statement, from which it appears that "ignorant" Italy during the period in question produced thirty-two more writers of eminence in the nine chief departments of literature, than proudly boasting England; and that France produced considerably more than five times the number! Figures cannot mislead, and facts are stubborn things!

It is a very common charge against the Catholic church that she keeps her people in ignorance; and to prove this accusation, an appeal is made to the condition of Catholic countries, in which, it is said, the common people are not educated. Let us see what a living author, and an unexceptionable witness, because a Protestant and a Scotchman, says upon this very subject. He relates, too, what he himself saw and had full opportunities of examining. We allude to Laing, whose "Notes of a Traveller" have just appeared.

He says: "In Catholic Germany, in France, and even in Italy, the education of the common people in reading, writing, arithmetic, music, manners, and morals, is at least as generally diffused and as faithfully promoted by the clerical body as in Scotland. It is by their own advance, and not by keeping back the advance of the people, that the popish priesthood of the present day seek to keep ahead of the intellectual progress of the community in Catholic lands: and they might perhaps retort on our Presbyterian clergy, and ask if they too are in their countries at the head of the intellectual movement of the age? Education is in reality not only not repressed, but is encouraged by the popish (!) church, and is a mighty instrument in its hands, and ably used. In every street in Rome, for instance, there are, at short distances, public primary schools for the education of the children of the lower and middle classes in the neighborhood. Rome, with a population of 158,678 souls, has three hundred and seventy-two* primary schools, with four hundred and eighty-two teachers, and fourteen thousand children attending them. Has Edinburg so many schools for the

* This number is perhaps somewhat below the mark. According to the *Cracas*, or Roman Almanac for 1834, Rome then had three hundred and eighty-one free schools; and we presume the number has not since decreased, as we know the population has been steadily increasing. Many of these schools are supported by private charity, while those of Protestant countries are maintained only by burdensome taxation.

instruction of those classes? I doubt it. Berlin, with a population about double that of Rome, has only two hundred and sixty-four schools. Rome has also her university, with an average attendance of six hundred and sixty students: and the papal states, with a population of two and a half millions, contain seven universities. Prussia, with a population of fourteen millions, has but seven."

The value of this splendid testimony is greatly enhanced when we reflect that Scotland and Prussia are the boasted lands of common schools. Protestants, it would seem, can *boast* more on what they have done for literature; but Catholics can *do* more without making any great parade.*

* For more on this subject, and especially on what Catholics have done for literature, see an article on "Literature and the Arts in the Middle Ages," in the Catholic Cabinet for November, 1843. Also an article in the December number of the same "on Schools and Universities in the Middle Ages;" and another in the January number (1844) of the U. S. Catholic Magazine, in answer to the question, "What have the Catholic clergy and monks done for literature?" We had at first resolved to republish, in an appendix to the present work, all these essays, as well as some others to which we have made reference; but the fear of swelling this volume to too great a size has prevented the execution of our original intention

CHAPTER XV.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON CIVILIZATION.

Definition—Religion, the basis—Reclaiming from barbarism—British East India possessions—Catholic and Protestant conquests—Protestant missions—Sandwich Islands—The mother of civilization—The ark amid the deluge—Rome converts the nations—Early German civilization—Mohammedanism—The crusades—The popes—Luther and the Turks—Luther retracts—Religious wars in Germany—Thirty years' war—General peace—Disturbed by the reformation—Comparison between Protestant and Catholic countries.

To *civilize*, according to lexicographers, is "to reclaim from a state of savageness and brutality." According to its more common acceptation, however, the word *civilization* implies more than a mere reclaiming from barbarism. It embraces, as its more prominent constituent elements, enlightenment of the public mind, good government conducted on liberal principles, a certain refinement in public taste and manners, and a gentleness and polish in social intercourse. The more fully these elements are developed together, the higher the state of civilization.

There can be no doubt that religion lies at the basis of all true civilization. A mere glance at the past history and present condition of the world must satisfy any impartial man of this truth. Those countries only have been blessed with a high degree of civilization which have been visited by the Christian religion. Those which have not had this visitation, or which have rejected it, are in a state of barbarism, or at least of semi-barbarism. If Europe is more highly civilized than any other quarter of the globe, it is precisely because she has been more fully under the humanizing influence of Christianity. If Af-

rica is the lowest in the scale, it is because her people have been least acted on by this influence.

Asia occupies an intermediate ground between barbarism on the one hand, and a state of semi-civilization on the other. That portion of her population which has never received the Christian religion, still continues in a state of unmitigated barbarism. That portion which once received, but has since in a great measure lost sight of or rejected the doctrines of Christianity, may in general be pronounced to be in a state but half-civilized. No more striking proof of the soundness of these remarks can perhaps be given, than the incontestable fact that all western Asia, embracing Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Bythinia, Mesopotamia, and Armenia, and which was, during the early ages of Christianity, in a high state of civilization, has since sunk into a state of semi-barbarism, when Christianity had been either extinguished or paralyzed in its influence by Mohammedanism. Constantinople, Antioch, and Ephesus, once the centres of civilization, and the radiating points of learning, are now the seats of barbarism—all their laurels withered, and all their glory fled, perhaps for ever! Egypt and northern Africa were also, during the first ages of the church, far advanced in civilized life. But what is their condition now, and what has it been for many centuries, since the overthrow of Christian institutions by those of Islamism? The dark night of barbarism still broods heavily over them, though a cheering twilight of dawn is beginning to brighten in Algeria. And, in Europe, those countries precisely have advanced the least in civilization which—as Russia and other more northern nations—have been less fully and powerfully acted on by the principles of the Christian religion.

From the facts already established in the previous chapters, we may easily gather what was the influence of the reformation on these two leading elements of civilization—free government and literary enlightenment. We think

that every impartial man who will take the trouble to weigh well the evidence already accumulated on those subjects, will come to the conclusion that, as far at least as these are concerned, the influence of the reformation was most injurious. We would not, however, be understood as denying that Protestantism subsequently exercised, at least occasionally and to some extent, a beneficial influence on the progress of society. We freely admit that Protestants have done something for this advancement of humanity: but we maintain that Catholics have done much more, and that, without the reformation, the world would have advanced much more rapidly in civilization than it has done with its co-operation.

To begin with the first idea implied by the term—a reclaiming from barbarism, what nation or people, we would ask, has Protestantism ever reclaimed from a barbarous to a civilized condition? What nation, or even considerable portion of a nation, has it ever converted from heathenism to Christianity? It has caused many to abandon the old system of religion, and to embrace its own crude and new-fangled notions: but we have yet to learn that it has brought *one* heathen people into the Christian fold. Many barbarous nations and tribes have been crushed or exterminated by the onward march of its own peculiar system of civilization; but not *one*, so far as our information extends, has been converted to Christianity, or even ameliorated in social condition, through its agency.

And yet Protestantism has had ample power in its hands for this purpose, as well as ample verge for its operations. With her almost unbounded power by sea and by land, England, to say nothing of other Protestant governments, might have, it would seem, converted whole nations to Christianity, and thereby reclaimed them from barbarism. With her vast power and influence in the East Indies, she might have at least made an effort to bring the immense nations, with their tens of millions of

inhabitants, which there acknowledge her sway, into the ample fold of Christian civilization. But what has she done? Has she ameliorated the civil condition of the seventy millions whom she holds in political thraldom in the east? Has she even made an effort, in her political capacity, to bring about this result? Has the inhuman car of Juggernaut ceased to crush its numerous victims? or have the obscene and wicked rites of paganism vanished before her influence?

She has indeed crushed or exterminated whole tribes by her arms, or ground them in the dust by her tyranny, and empoverished them by her exactions! She has done much to render Christian civilization odious in their eyes: she has done little or nothing to render it amiable or attractive. A lust of power and of money has been the great guiding, all-absorbing principle of her policy: and its effects are visible in the yet deeper and deeper degradation of the millions who unwillingly bow beneath her yoke. It is deemed unnecessary to multiply proofs to establish what must be apparent to every one who has even glanced at the history of the conquests and policy of England in her East India possessions. Her own writers and the official acts of parliament have proclaimed these iniquities to the world: and no one will be so skeptical as to question their truth, or to deny their enormity.

Happily, such has not been the case with Catholic conquests among barbarous nations. The first thing always thought of by Catholic sovereigns who established their power in heathen lands, was to introduce Christianity among the tribes whom they had subdued, and to bring about, through its agency, their gradual civilization. The Catholic missionary always accompanied the leader of Catholic maritime discovery and conquest, to soften down the horrors of war, to pour oil into the wounds of the vanquished people, and to direct their attention to sublime visions of civilization, of religion, of heaven. The

cross was always reared by the side of the banner of conquest. And the result has been that wherever Catholic conquest has extended, there religion has been also established, and, through it, civilization has been introduced.

Whoever will read attentively the annals of Spanish and Portuguese voyages of discovery and conquest in America and the Indies, will be convinced of the entire truth of this remark. Our countryman, Washington Irving,* has done ample justice to this subject; and we confidently appeal to the evidence his magic pen has spread before the world, for a triumphant proof of our assertion. Our attention is often directed, with a sneer of triumph, to the inferior political condition of Spanish America: but those who employ this silly argument, and boast of their own superior civilization and refinement, do not reflect, or would not have us reflect, that, whereas the Spaniards and Portuguese settled down and intermarried with the aborigines, and used every effort to civilize them, in which they have partially succeeded; we in North America, with all our boasted superiority, have circumvented, goaded into war, driven from place to place, and finally almost exterminated the poor Indians, the original proprietors of our soil.† Protestantism is heartily welcome to all the laurels of civilization it has won in this field.

It is rather a remarkable coincidence that, in the very first year of the reformation, 1517, the first expedition of the Spaniards for the conquest of Mexico—that under Cordova—was undertaken. Two years later, in 1519, Hernando Cortes undertook the expedition which achieved the conquest of Mexico. On his standard was the motto:

* In his "Life of Columbus," 2 vols. 8vo. New York, 1831. See the evidence he alleges on our present subject, accumulated in a Review of Webster's Bunker Hill Speech, published in the Catholic Cabinet of St. Louis, October, 1843.

† See Bancroft's testimonies and other evidences on the subject, collected *ibid.*

"*Amici, crucem sequamur, et in hoc signo vincemus*"—"Friends, let us follow the cross, and under this banner shall we conquer." According to the account of the Spanish missionaries who accompanied this expedition of Cortes, *six millions* of Mexicans were received into the Catholic church by baptism during the years intervening between 1524 and 1540, the very period in which the reformation was progressing most rapidly in Europe. It is highly probable that, by this remarkable stroke of Divine Providence, the Catholic church thus gained at least as many new disciples in Spanish America alone, as she lost old ones in Europe through the reformation!*

We must admit that Protestants have made great efforts to convert heathen nations. Millions of money have been liberally bestowed for this benevolent purpose. Large bodies of missionaries, with their wives and families, have been annually sent out by Bible and other Protestant societies, to evangelize and civilize heathen lands. Not only their expenses have been liberally paid, but they have had handsome salaries, and often princely establishments. But what have they done, with all the money that has been thus expended, and all the parade that has been made, on the subject?

> ..... *Quid*
> *Hic faciet tanto dignum promissor hiatu?*

Have they converted *one* nation to Christianity? If they have, history is silent as to its locality.† Much was once said about the conversion of the Sandwich islands by American Protestant missionaries: but this has all turned out, like other similar schemes of conversion, a miserable failure. The first effect of Protestant civilization in those

* See article *Despatches of Hernando Cortes*, in the North American Review for October, 1843.

† See most abundant evidence, chiefly from Protestants themselves, in Dr. Wiseman's "Lectures on the Catholic Religion," 2 vols. 12mo. vol. i, lect. vi.

islands was a reduction of the native population by more than one half: the next was the enriching of the missionaries themselves, a very usual occurrence, by the way, and one which exhibits the chief advantage of those missionary enterprises: the third was a most disgraceful persecution of brother Christian missionaries, so much so that a Catholic potentate felt himself called on to interfere: and the last effect seems to have been an almost total abandonment of the whole undertaking.* A distinguished modern writer† has well remarked that the Protestant sects have been ever doomed to sterility since their divorce from the only true spouse of Christ—the Catholic church.

On the other hand, what has the Catholic church done for civilization? What nations has she converted to Christianity? We may answer the question by asking another. What nation or people is there, of all those on the face of the earth who have entered the Christian fold, which she has *not* been mainly instrumental in converting and civilizing? Is there even *one?* What says faithful history on the subject?

During the first four centuries of Christianity, the principal nations of Europe, as well as many of those of Asia and Africa, had been converted by missionaries sent either directly by Rome, or at least in communion and acting in concert with the Roman see. The cross of Christ had been borne in triumph to the most remote extremities of the Roman empire, which embraced all Europe and a great portion of Asia and Africa. It had been planted even in the midst of people who were beyond the boundaries of the vast territory ruled by Rome. As early as the close of the second century, St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, could say in triumph that many barbarous nations in Germany and elsewhere, over whose heads the Roman

* Ibid. See also the late Catholic papers *passim*.

† Count De Maistre—Du Pape, vol. ii.

eagle had never floated, had already received the gospel, although they were unlettered and unacquainted with the uses of *paper* and *ink*. Tertullian, a writer who flourished in the beginning of the third century, could also say, in a defence of Christianity addressed to the Roman emperor and senate, that Christians had already filled the villages, the towns, the cities, the castles, and the armies of the Roman empire, and that they had left only the temples of paganism to their idolatrous persecutors!

In the fifth and sixth centuries, a deluge of barbarism overwhelmed the Roman empire of the west, which was already fast verging to its final downfall. The ancient Roman civilization was buried under its turbid waters. The ark of the church alone rode in safety the angry flood: and when its waters had subsided, the tenants of this ark, as had been done by those of its prototype of old, repeopled the earth. In it were preserved, together with Christianity, the seeds of a new civilization, more refined and elevated by far than that which had been swept from the face of the earth. These were scattered broadcast over the soil of the world: the church watered them with the tears of her maternal solicitude, and, when they had sprung up, she nurtured the plants and brought them to maturity. Thus to her alone is due the credit of having rescued the world from barbarism, and of having again carefully collected and skilfully put together the scattered elements of the new civilization. All modern improvement dates back to this era, as certainly and as necessarily as does the present existence and extension of the human race to the epoch of the deluge. We owe as much to the church as to Noah's ark.

The hordes of the north, who had trodden in the dust the Roman empire as well as Christianity, which was grafted thereon, entered themselves, one by one, into the ample fold of the church. The fierce conquerors willingly bowed their necks to receive the yoke of the conquered! Christianity thus triumphed, like her divine Founder, by

being seemingly conquered for a time. It is not a little remarkable, too, that *all* the nations of the north were converted by missionaries sent by Rome.

Ireland was the first to enter into the Christian fold: and she became subsequently a principal instrument in the hands of Providence for converting the other northern nations. She had never bent beneath the oppressive weight of the Roman power, nor had she been instrumental in effecting the downfall of the Roman empire. Yet was she the first nation of the north that assumed the sweet yoke of Christ. In the beginning of the fifth century, A. D. 430, Pope Celestine I sent St. Patrick into Ireland, and St. Palladius into Scotland. Towards the close of the same century, in 496, St. Remigius baptized at Rheims, King Clovis and three thousand officers of his army, thus laying the foundation of Christianity in France.

Near the close of the sixth century, A.D. 591, Pope St. Gregory the Great sent St. Augustine and his forty companions into England. These converted the kingdom of Kent, and soon all England followed the example. In the seventh century, St. Kilian, sent by Pope Conon, preached the gospel in Franconia; St. Swidbert and others evangelized Friesland, Brabant, Holland, and lower Germany; and St. Rupert became the apostle of Bohemia. In the eighth century, St. Boniface, sent by Pope Gregory II, 719, converted the Hessians, Thuringians, and Bavarians, and suffered martyrdom at length in Friesland, in 755, with fifty-two of his companions. Saints Corbinian, Willibrord, and Vigilius were his co-operators in the apostleship.

In the ninth century, St. Adalbert converted Prussia: and St. Ludger became the apostle of Saxony and Westphalia, and died bishop of Münster. In the same age, St. Anscarius, archbishop of Hamburg and Bremen, preached the gospel to the Danes, and planted Christianity in Sweden, about the year 830. About the same period, the two brothers, Saints Methodius and Cyril, with the sanc-

tion of Pope John VIII, converted the Sclavonians, the Russians, and the Moravians, and also Michael, king of the Bulgarians. In the tenth century, the faith was extended into Muscovy, Denmark, Gothland, Sweden, and Poland. The Normans, with their king, Roland, were converted in 912; and the Hungarians, with their king, St. Stephen, embraced Christianity about the year 1002.*

Thus all the nations of Europe were successively converted to Christianity by the agency of the Roman Catholic church, and by missionaries sent by Rome. Their civilization was a necessary sequel to their conversion. They were indebted for both to Rome. This was especially true in relation to the German nations. We have seen above the avowal of M. D'Aubigné himself on this subject. As M. Audin well remarks, "it was religion that had softened the savage manners of its inhabitants, cleared its forests, peopled its solitudes, and aided in throwing off the yoke of the Romans. Whatever poetry, music, or intellectual culture it possessed when Luther appeared, it owed to its ancient bishops. The feudal tree had first flourished on its soil. It had its electors, dukes, barons, who were often bishops or archbishops. Of all the European states, it was the one in which the influence of the papacy had been most vividly felt."†

He might have added that whatever of liberty it possessed, it had also derived from Rome. She had abolished the serf system, had opened sanctuaries for the oppressed, had proscribed the trial by ordeal, and had substituted for it a more rational system of judicature. She had purified and elevated the old German jurisprudence by the provisions of her canon law; and, by declaring the oppressed and crushed subject free from the obligation of his oath of allegiance to the oppressor, she had broken his bonds, and taught him his political rights.

* See Church Historians, *passim*.

† Life of Luther, *sup. cit.* p. 343, 344.

In a word, Rome was, for Germany more especially, the centre of civilization, and the point from which enlightenment radiated throughout her territory.

The deluge of barbarian invasion having subsided, and the barbarians themselves having been converted to Christianity, a new and most appalling danger threatened European civilization, nay, the independence and the very existence of Europe. The Mohammedan imposture, commencing at Mecca in the year 622, had rapidly overspread a great part of Asia and Africa, and had penetrated into Europe, through Spain, as early as the year 711. In the east it menaced Constantinople, the capital of the Greek empire; in the south and west it threatened more nearly European independence. Masters of northern Africa, of Spain, and of the Mediterranean, the followers of Mohammed were ready to penetrate into Europe on all sides, with the scimitar in one hand, and the Koran in the other. The consequences of their successful incursion would have been, what they had been every where else, the ruin of literature and liberty, the destruction of Christianity and civilization, and wide-spread ruin and desolation. Wherever they had penetrated, they had blighted every flower, and plucked every fruit of the existing civilization. The once flourishing provinces of Asia and Africa, which had been forced to wear their iron yoke, riveted on their necks, had relapsed into a state of barbarism, from which, alas! they are not yet recovered.

In this emergency, what saved European civilization and independence? What agency kept off the impending storm? The church and the Roman pontiffs. The latter, by their influence, succeeded in arousing Europe from its lethargy, and in awakening her to a lively sense of the threatened danger. They persuaded Christians to bury their private feuds, to be united as one man, and to rally in their united strength for the defence of the cross against the invading hosts marshalled under the crescent. Long and fiercely raged the struggle—Christianity, civil-

ization, enlightenment and liberty, and the cross, on the one hand, and Mohammedanism, barbarism, ignorance, despotism, and the crescent, on the other.

The first check given to Mohammedan conquest was in the famous victory gained over the followers of the crescent by Charles Martel, at the head of the French chivalry, near Tours, in 732. The closing events of the protracted struggle were equally glorious for the Christian cause. The battle of Lepanto, in 1571, crippled the energies of the Turks, by destroying their whole fleet, and the relief of Vienna, besieged by the Turkish army in 1683, by the brave Sobieski, at the head of his thirty thousand Poles, drove the Mohammedans from Europe, and cut off all hopes of any farther European conquests by their armies.

The popes were the very soul of all Christian enterprises for repelling Turkish invasion. It was they who first conceived that master-stroke of policy which, through the crusades, carried the war into the enemies' country, and for centuries gave them enough to do at home, without thinking of foreign conquests. It was they who united Europe, for the first time, in one great cause. It was Pope St. Pius V who deserved the chief credit of the signal victory at Lepanto.

It was they who ennobled chivalry, and consecrated valor, for the defence of Christian Europe. It was they who nerved for battle the arms of the brave knights of Rhodes and Malta, and inspired the heroism of the Hunniades, of the Scanderbergs, of the Cids, of the Bouillons, and the Tancreds, and of others, who won imperishable laurels in that struggle. But for *their* exertions, and the blessings of that God who had promised that "the gates of hell should not prevail against his church built on a rock," Europe would in every human probability have become, what Asia and Africa have long been, a mere degraded province of a colossal Mohammedan em-

pire, which would have bestrode the earth, crushing beneath its weight every principle of civilization!

Did the reformation win any laurels in this contest? Did it strike *one* blow for the independence of Europe against the Turks, who, when it first appeared, were at the very zenith of their power, and were assuming the most threatening attitude against Europe? We will give a few facts which will show the spirit of early Protestantism on the subject.

Among the articles which Luther obstinately refused to retract at the diet of Worms, in 1521, was this strange and impious paradox: "that to war against the Turks is to oppose God!"* In his fierce invective against the conciliatory decree which emanated from the diet of Nuremberg in 1524, he thus castigates the princes who had composed that diet: "Christians, I beg of you, raise your hands, and pray for these blind princes, with whom heaven punishes us in its wrath. Give not alms against the Turk, who is a thousand times wiser and more pious than our princes. What success can such fools, who rebel against Christ and despise his word, hope in the war against the Turks?"†

This warning was directed against the decree of the Diet, which, alarmed by the menacing attitude of the sublime Porte, "had demanded and voted subsidies for the war against the Turks. The Catholics contributed, the Protestants refused: but the contributions of the Catholics were not sufficient to arrest the progress of Soliman. At the head of two hundred thousand men, he advanced into Hungary, and on the 26th of September, 1529, he was about to plant his ladders against the walls of Vienna.

* "Præliari adversus Turcas est repugnare Deo." Assertio articulorum per Leonem damnatorum. Opp. Lutheri, tom. ii, p. 3. Audin, p. 174.

† Luther Werke, ch. xv, p. 2, 712. Adolph Menzel, tom. i, p. 155 seq. Apud Audin, p. 286. See also Cochlæus in Acta Lutheri, folio 116.

This cowardly abandonment of their brethren is an ineffaceable stain on the Protestant party. At the approach of the enemy, who threatened the cross of Christ, all disunion should have ceased. The country was in danger; the Christian name was on the point of being blotted out from Germany; and Islamism would have triumphed, had there not been brave hearts behind the walls which the treachery of their brethren had laid bare. Honor then to those valiant chiefs, Philip Count Palatine, Nicholas von Salm, William von Regendorf, and that population of aged men, of women, and of children, who, although suffering from famine, sickness and pestilence—for all seemed united to overwhelm them—did not despair, but drove back to Constantinople the army of Soliman. After God, they owed their success to their valor; for the Emperor, the empire, and the princes had abandoned them. Luther had cried aloud 'peace to the Turks;' and his voice was more powerful than the cry of their weeping country, and of the cross of Christ. The reader must judge between the reformed and the Catholics, and say, in what veins Christian blood flowed."*

Subsequently indeed, when the danger was passed, and Luther had little to apprehend from the Emperor or the Catholic party, he retracted his wild paradoxes, and ceased to be the apologist of the Turks. But who thanked him for this tardy and compulsory advocacy of European independence against Turkish invasion? All that it demonstrated was his own utter inconsistency in the whole affair, in which he did but act out his general character,—as a mere creature of impulse and of passion.

Erasmus thus twits the Protestant party on their conduct in the matter: "But you seem to forget that you refused to give Charles V, and Ferdinand, the subsidies necessary for the war against the Turks, according to the doctrine of Luther, who now however condescends to re-

* Audin, p. 289, 290.

tract! Have not the gospellers advanced the startling proposition, 'that it is better to fight for the unbaptized, than for the baptized, Turk,' that is, for the Emperor? Is it not truly ridiculous?"* It was something more than "ridiculous"—which was the strongest epithet the Batavian philosopher could employ—it was utterly treacherous and lamentable; and if European civilization was still saved, and European independence preserved, we certainly owe no thanks to the reformation! If we are still free; if we are not ground down by Turkish tyranny; if we bow to the cross instead of the crescent; we owe no gratitude for these results to the Protestant party! Their sympathies were manifestly Mohammedan; they would have rejoiced at the ascendency of Islamism, provided the Pope and his adherents could have been crushed and annihilated! They shared in none of the laurels won for European independence and civilization, at Lepanto, under the walls of Vienna, in Hungary, in Poland, in Albania, or at Rhodes and Malta! Their chivalry could not be awakened, nor their sympathies stirred up by any such brilliant achievements! And yet M. D'Aubigné gravely assures us, that "the reformation saved religion, and through it society?"† Deliver us from such a "salvation!"

We have already said something on the character of the bloody civil wars with which the reformation desolated Germany. We compared the multitude of devastating armies, which it let loose on Europe, to those which had desolated her fair provinces in the fifth and sixth centuries. This parallel is not exaggerated: it is founded on the sad records of history. In reading of the dreadful tragedies enacted in the war of the peasants and of the Anabaptists, in the Thirty Years' War, we are forcibly reminded of the devastations which the early northmen left in their course. Especially does the parallel hold

* "In Pseudo-Evangelicos" Epist. 47, Lib. xxxi.—Edit. of London, Flesher. † Vol. i, p. 67, *sup. citat.*

good, in respect to the ravaging of Italy and Rome by the Lutheran troops under the Constable Bourbon, referred to above. Münzer, Storck and Stübner strongly remind us of Attila, Totila, and Genseric. All were, if not "the scourges of God," at least, in another sense, the scourges of man and of society. They were all fierce wild animals let loose for a time to devastate the blooming garden of European civilization.

The following address of Münzer to his associates in rebellion, we give as one out of the many similar specimens of the infuriate vandalism of the sixteenth century. "Are you then asleep, my brethren! Come to the fight, the fight of heroes. All Frankonia has risen up: the Master will now show himself: the wicked shall fall. At Fulda, in Easter week, *four pestiferous churches were destroyed.* The peasants of Klegan have taken up arms. Although you were but three confessors of Jesus, you would not have to fear a hundred thousand enemies. Draw, draw, draw—now is the time: the impious shall be chased like dogs. No mercy for those atheists: they will beset you; they will blubber like children—but spare them not. It is the command of God by Moses (v. 7).—Draw, draw, draw—the fire burns; let not the blood grow cold on your sword-blades. Pink, pank, on the anvil of Nimrod: let the towers fall under your stroke. Draw, draw, draw—now is the day: God leads you on; follow Him."*

Schiller, a Protestant, has most graphically painted the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, and the desolation which it occasioned in Germany. The master mind of Schlegel thus traces its effects on civilization: "Never was there a religious war so widely extended and so complicated in its operations, so protracted in its duration, and entailing misery on so many generations. That period of thirty years' havoc, in which the *early civilization,*

* Luther Werke—Edit. Altenburg, iii vol. p. 134. Menzel, p. 200-2.

and the noblest energies of Germany were destroyed, forms in history the great wall of separation between the ancient Germany, which in the middle age was the most powerful, flourishing, and wealthy country in Europe; and the new Germany of recent and happier times, which is now gradually recovering from her long exhaustion and general desolation; and is rising again into light and life from the sepulchral darkness—the night of death, to which her ancient disputes had consigned her."* It required full two centuries for Germany to recover from the blow to her civilization, dealt her by the ruthless reformation! Even M. Villers, the champion *laureate* of the reformation, is compelled to admit, that "the Thirty Years' War left Germany in a sort of stupor—in a barbarism almost total."†

From the facts hitherto alleged, the reader will be enabled to judge what was the relative influence on civilization of early Catholicism and of the reformation. He will also be able to gather the more immediate influence of the latter revolution on civilization in Germany—its cradle and first theatre of action. To estimate this influence, however, more nearly and more correctly, we must see what was the condition of Germany in regard to civilization before, and what it became immediately after, the reformation.

Before it, a general peace reigned: the elements of civilized life were all in a state of healthy growth and of rapid development: every thing bade fair for a very high state of refinement and civilization. For the development of these, peace is as necessary, as it is for the cultivation of letters. M. D'Aubigné himself speaks of the great advantages to civilization of the general peace secured to Germany in 1496, by the wise policy of the Emperor Maximilian. "For a long time," he says, "the numerous

* "Philosophy of History," vol. ii, p. 232, American Edit.

† "Essai sur l'esprit et l'influence de la reform. de Luther," p. 274. Apud Robelot, p. 392.

members of the Germanic body had labored to disturb each other. Nothing had been seen but confusions, quarrels, wars incessantly breaking out between neighbors, cities and chiefs. Maximilian had laid a solid basis of public order, by instituting the Imperial Chamber appointed to settle all differences between the States. The Germans, after so many confusions and anxieties, saw a new era of safety and repose. The condition of affairs powerfully contributed to harmonize the public mind. It was now possible in the cities and peaceful valleys of Germany to seek and adopt ameliorations, which discord might have banished."*

He continues, with not a little *simplicity:* "we may add, that it is in the bosom of peace, that the Gospel loves most to gain its blessed victories."† He means this of course for the "gospel" of Luther—but did not this same "gospel," break in, with its accents of discord, and its fierce spirit of feud and bloodshed, upon the general peace, secured to Germany by a Catholic potentate, in Catholic times? Did it not by its truculent war-cry, mar the lovely beauty of their peaceful scene? Did it not ruthlessly rend with dissension that "public mind" which before so beautifully "harmonized?" Did it not evoke from the abyss that fell spirit of "discord," which "banished from the cities and peaceful valleys of Germany," all relish for "seeking and adopting ameliorations" in the social condition? Did it not, for more than a century, tear and desolate society with civil feuds and bloody wars? And is it not supremely ridiculous, as Erasmus says, to hear men of sense thus uttering absurdities which they themselves supply evidence for refuting? From the principles laid down by M. D'Aubigné, it is intuitively evident, that the reformation of Luther was highly injurious in its influence on the progress of civilization.

What have been the great results of Protestant and of

* Vol. i, p. 76, 77. † Ibid.

Catholic influence on modern civilization? What is the present relative social condition of Catholic and of Protestant countries in Europe? In some respects, we are free to avow, the latter are far in advance of the former. They have adopted with more eagerness, and carried out with more success, what may be called the utilitarian system, which in fact owes its origin to the reformation. They excel in commerce and speculation, in which they have greatly outwitted their more simple—perhaps because more honest neighbors. They far excel in stock-jobbing, and in all the mysteries of the "Exchange." They surpass in banking, and have issued many more notes "promising to pay," than their neighbors: though these latter, especially in Spain, seldom fail to pay without any "promises" to that effect; nor have they ever been known to redeem their pledges by bankruptcy or repudiation—an easy modern method to pay old debts!

Protestant countries have also published more books on political economy and "the wealth of nations:" they have also excelled in manufactures and in machinery. But the modern utilitarian plan of conducting the latter, in England more particularly, has contributed not a little to empoverish and debase the lower orders of the people—which, however, according to the doctrine of that most fashionable theory, is not at all opposed to the "wealth of nations;" for this is entirely compatible with the general poverty of the masses!

But in enlightenment of mind, and in gentleness of manners—in the general features and in the suavity of social intercourse—do Protestant countries in Europe—for we wish not here to speak of our own country, which is not strictly Protestant—really surpass Catholic nations? We think not. We believe the balance would rather incline in favor of the latter. We have shown, that in point of general learning and enlightenment, Catholic countries compare most advantageously with those that are Protestant. This we think we have established on

unexceptionable Protestant authority. In point of refinement and polish of manners, Catholic France is avowedly in advance of all other nations. The Spanish gentleman is perhaps the noblest and best type of elevated human nature. The warm-hearted, courteous, and refined politeness of Italy and Ireland, compares most favorably with the coldness and the blunt selfishness of Germany and England.

In a word, the South of Europe, which has continued under Catholic influence, will suffer nothing by being brought into comparison, in regard to all the features of refined intercourse, with the cold, calculating North, which has, to a great extent, embraced the doctrines of the reformation. Though not illumined with the new "northern light" which has fitfully shone on the minds of the Protestants, for three centuries, they are still, to say the least, as enlightened, as polished, as refined, and as highly civilized, as their more fortunate neighbors. The steady old light of Catholicism, which shed its blessed rays on their forefathers, has been luminous enough to guide their path!

CONCLUSION.

We have now completed our task; how well, the public will best judge. We have examined the principal false statements of M. D'Aubigné; and, in doing so, we have also glanced occasionally at his frequent inconsistencies and absurdities. To have followed him in detail throughout his tedious history—to have convicted him of unfair or false statements on almost every page—to have unmasked his hypocrisy and laid bare his contradictions—would have imposed on us an almost endless labor. Yet this would have been less difficult perhaps than the task we have performed. For it is much easier to grapple with

an adversary, page by page, and sentence by sentence; than to cull out from his pages, and to refute, such general misstatements as are of most importance, and as cover the whole ground of the controversy. The former method is a kind of light skirmishing; the latter is a more serious and weighty species of warfare.

We hope that, when another *cheap* edition of M. D'Aubigné's "history of the great reformation" will appear, in three volumes *duodecimo*, this Review of it—which will make a volume to match—will be also republished, as the fourth of the series. This is the highest object of our ambition. The readers would then, at least, have an opportunity of seeing both sides of a very important question, involving their interests for time and eternity!

Though we have been compelled to allege strong facts and to use plain language, yet we hope we have carefully abstained from employing any epithets unnecessarily harsh or offensive. God is our witness, that we have not meant wantonly to wound the feelings of any one. Deeply as we feel, and sincerely as we deplore, the evils of which the reformation has been the cause—the unsettling of faith, the numberless sects, the bitter and acrimonious disputes, and the consequent rending of society into warring elements—yet do we feel convinced, that all these crying evils, which originated in a spirit of hatred and revolt, can be healed only by the contrary principle of love and charity.

Fain would we pour oil on the bleeding wounds of a divided and lacerated Christianity. Fain would we contribute our humble mite to bind up those wounds, and to bring back that charming religious harmony which once blessed the world. The bitter experience of three centuries has proved, that a re-union among Christians cannot be brought about, but by a return to the bosom of the Catholic church, of those who, in an evil hour for themselves and for the world, strayed from its pale. It is only in the "old paths," hallowed by the footsteps of martyrs,

of saints and of virgins, that perfect peace and security can be found. To all the lovers of unity, we would then say in the words of God's plaintive prophet: "Thus saith the Lord: stand ye on the ways, and see, and ask for *the old paths*, which is the good way, and walk ye in it; and you shall find refreshment to your souls."*

"Refreshment" and peace can be found no where else. All other expedients for re-establishing religious union on a solid basis, have been tried in vain. It is only in communion with the Chair of Peter—the rock on which Christ built His church—that Christians can be secured in unity and peace.

"That no lambkin might wander in error benighted,
But homeward the true path may hold,
The Redeemer ordained that in one faith united,
One Shepherd shall govern the fold."

* Jeremiah vi, 16.

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